

782.6
of 28
1869

THE
GRAND DUCHESS
OF
GEROLSTEIN.

COMIC OPERA IN THREE ACTS.

BY
J. OFFENBACH.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

LONDON:
BOOSEY & CO., HOLLES STREET, W.

1869.

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M. OFFENBACH'S OPERAS.

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28, HOLLES STREET.

THE GRAND DUCHESS OF GEROLSTEIN.

COMIC OPERA IN THREE ACTS,

BY

HENRY MEILHAC AND LUDOVIC HALÉVY.

THE ENGLISH VERSION BY

CHARLES LAMB KENNEY.

THE MUSIC BY

J. OFFENBACH.

The English Version first produced at COVENT GARDEN THEATRE, Monday, November 18th,
1867, under the management of Mr. JOHN RUSSELL.

LONDON:
BOOSEY & CO., HOLLES STREET, W.

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Of 2 g
1869

July '56. Clark.


Gen. res., 24 Je 47, Spencer

CHARACTERS.

GRAND DUCHESS.....	MISS EMILY SOLDENE
WANDA(<i>a Peasant Girl</i>)	„ MARIA CRUISE
PRINCE PAUL	MR. J. D. STOYLE
GENERAL BOOM.....(<i>Commander-in-Chief</i>)	„ AYN SLEY COOK
BARON PUCK(<i>a Diplomatist</i>)	„ W. H. NORTON
BARON GROG(<i>a Diplomatist</i>)	„ H. RAYNOR
NEPOMUC..... { (<i>Aide-de-Camp to the</i>) { <i>Grand Duchess</i>) }	„ FRED. PAYNE
FRITZ(<i>a Soldier</i>)	„ BEVERLEY

*Ladies of the Court, Maids of Honour, Pages, Soldiers of the Grand
Duchess' Army, Vivandières, &c., &c.*

DIRECTORMR. J. RUSSELL



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THE GRAND DUCHESS

OF

GEROLSTEIN.

CHARACTERS.

THE GRAND DUCHESS.	NEPOMUC (<i>an Aide-de-Camp</i>).
FRITZ.	WANDA (<i>a Peasant Girl</i>).
PRINCE PAUL.	CHARLOTTE
BARON PUCK.	OLGA
GENERAL BOOM.	AMELIA
BARON GROG.	IZA

} (*Maids of Honour*).

Lords and Ladies of the Court, Maids of Honour, two Pages, two Ushers, Soldiers of the Grand Duchess's army, two Vivandières, Peasant Girls, two Negro Boys.

The date of the action is 1720.

Costumes—German, exaggerated fantastically, ad libitum.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An encampment of soldiers. Tents are seen scattered over the face of the country. R. second entrance, the tent of GENERAL BOOM opening upon the stage. At the back a practicable hill, the ascent of which commences in the middle of the stage and proceeds from right to left, and then from left to right. Muskets in racks—Soldiers, peasant girls, vivandières.*

CHORUS.

Ere call'd to face the foeman's volley,
And rush to death or victory,
We'll quaff and laugh—short life and jolly
The soldier's maxim aye should be;
Laughing,
Quaffing,
Dancing,
Prancing,

Ere call'd to face the foeman's volley
And rush to death or victory, &c.

[*During the Chorus, some of the soldiers waltz with the peasant girls; others are playing the drum, others drinking. Vivandières pass among them serving out liquor. An animated tableau is formed. Enter FRITZ and WANDA L. U. E.*

WANDA. Sad, dear Fritz, am I at learning
To the wars that you must go.

FRITZ. Dear, to hasten my returning,
I'll the deuce play with the foe.

SONG.

I.

Round in circles spinning,
 Twirl ye maidens free;
 Soon you homeward hieing
 Sheltered all will be,
 While howe'er unwilling,
 Off we chaps must trot,
 For a paltry shilling
 Standing to be shot.
 But what boots complaining,
 Fate we can't withstand;
 So the time remaining
 Pass we glass in hand.
 Off the tankard toss, then,
 Each man's lot is cast.
 Your's, dear, were the loss, then,
 Prov'd this cup the last.
 Come maidens so winning,
 Brave lads all, and some
 To waltz hither come
 With fife and with drum,
 Like a top round spinning,
 Or a tee-to-tum.
 To waltz hither come
 With fife and with drum.

They waltz to the burden.]

II.

When the trumpet sounding
 Summons us to march,
 Tears and sobs abounding,
 Pretty throats will parch.
 Calm your apprehension,
 Dears, we'll write anon,
 And correctly mention
 How we're getting on.
 Thus all fears allaying,
 Hearts will constant prove,
 Though away we're staying.
 But till off we move
 Down the wine we'll toss, dears,
 Arms about you cast.
 Yours would be the loss, dears,
 Prov'd this kiss the last.
 Come each maiden arming
 Brave lads all, and some
 To waltz hither come
 With fife and with drum,
 Like a top round spinning,
 Or a tee-to-tum,
 To waltz hither come,
 With fife and with drum.

[*Waltz repeated. Just in the most animated part enter GENERAL BOOM & down the hill at back. His cock'd hat is surmounted by an enormous plume. He stops to look at the scene and gesticulates as if highly indignant.*

GEN. BOOM (*coming down to the front*). What! women in the camp
 Tis no less than flat treason!

[*Women run away screaming right and left.*

FRITZ (*in front, aside*). Jove! 'Tis he! What a start!

GEN. BOOM. Have you then lost, my men, all sense of time and season?

FRITZ. A soldier tho' he be a man has still a heart.

GEN. BOOM. You again! dare wag your tongue!

FRITZ. I only said—

GEN. BOOM. Don't reason!

Whene'er I frown to speak none dare,
That I ne'er joke all are aware.

CHORUS.

Whene'er he frowns, to speak none dare,
That he ne'er jokes all are aware.

SONG.—GEN. BOOM.

Never balked—never hesitating—

Onward I swoop!

O'er hill and dale exterminating

Troop after troop!

The fiercest foe that moment cowers

Quaking with dread

When he beholds this plume that towers

Here o'er my head.

With a bing, bang, bong, ta-ta-ra-pa-poom!

A General am I and my name is Boom!

CHORUS.

With a bing, bang, bong, ta-ta-ra-pa-poom!

A General is he and his name is Boom!

II.

And when the din of battle o'er

Home I repair,

In festive halls I'm for a lover

Claim'd by each fair;

While my moustache they stroke confessing

Me they adore,

I own my plume gets quite distressing—

In fact a bore!

With a bing, bang, bong, ta-ta-ra-pa-poom!

A General am I and my name is Boom!

CHORUS.

With a bing, bang, bong, ta-ta-ra-pa-poom!

A General is he and his name is Boom!

ALL. Hurrah! for General Boom!

BOOM. That's my brave fellows. Now I recognize the gallant soldiers of our sovereign mistress, the Grand Duchess of Gerolstein.

ALL. Long live the Grand Duchess!

BOOM. You're not a bad lot of soldiers, but that fellow Fritz there sets you a shocking example.

FRITZ. There now! I knew he'd come down upon me.

BOOM. Private Fritz! step forward.

FRITZ. General—

BOOM. You're a disgrace to the service.

FRITZ. Ah! I know what makes you go on like that, it all comes of the girls.

BOOM. What do you mean, Sir!

FRITZ. That you're making up to little Wanda.

BOOM. No such thing.

FRITZ. I beg your pardon, you did make up to her, and she would'n't have you, seeing that she's in love with me, and that's now it is.

BOOM (*aside*). Furies !

FRITZ. Women have such very bad taste. They actually prefer the young soldier to the venerable commander.

BOOM. I'll have you sent to the black hole.

FRITZ. That won't alter the case.

BOOM. I'll have you shot.

FRITZ. Oh ! that would be clever !

BOOM. You're a disgrace to the service !

FRITZ. Much you'd care if I was ; on the contrary I'm a very pretty soldier, and that's what makes you mad.

BOOM. Silence !

FRITZ. Oh ! I'm dumb, but never mind.

BOOM. I never paid the slightest attention to the young woman.

FRITZ. Begging your pardon a second time, you did pay her a great deal of attention.

Enter NEPOMUC.

NEP. General !

BOOM (*eagerly*). Let me hope, Sir, you come to announce the enemy's approach—say so, Sir—I entreat you to say so !

NEP. No, General. I have merely come to inform you that the Grand Duchess is coming to inspect her regiment.

BOOM. Soldiers ! you hear.

NEP. She desires that a tent may be erected for her—on this spot—in the very midst of her soldiers' encampment. [*Exit R. U. E.*]

BOOM. Sharp ! there—post a sentry here !—private Fritz !

FRITZ (*aside*). He always pitches on me—(*aloud*) General—

BOOM. You'll mount guard here.

FRITZ. Of course, right under the blazing sun.

BOOM. No remarks !

FRITZ. What on earth is the use of a sentry there ?

BOOM. To keep guard over the Grand Duchess's tent.

FRITZ. Well, but there's no tent up yet.

BOOM. You'll keep guard over the spot where it is to be.

FRITZ. I suppose then it's to prevent some one running away with the ground ? Why there's no sense at all in it.

BOOM. You're always supposing *then*.

FRITZ. Very good—very good—I know what it all means—it's all the girls—that's what it is—all the girls.

BOOM. Oh wouldn't I have you shot, my fine fellow, but that on the eve of a battle I dare not diminish my effective force.

FRITZ. Ah, that's where it is—you're afraid to diminish your effective force.

BOOM. Then I'm not to have the last word ?

FRITZ. Why, of course not.

BOOM. In that case I shan't be such an ass as to hold out. Soldiers, form !

(*Drums roll, soldiers take their arms and form into two ranks at the back of the stage.*) Carry arms !

(*Fritz who has taken up his gun from the left hand corner, stands looking on in an unconcerned manner.*)

FRITZ (*to the General when the soldiers have formed*) Now I should very much like to know where the deuce you are off to now ?

BOOM (*in a towering rage*). By the Lord, this is too much. What business is that of yours. Am I going to be called upon to give you an account of all my movements ? Soldiers ! to the left wheel ! forward, march !

CHORUS.

With a bing, bang, bong—tara-pa-pa-pa-poom
Our General leads on, follow we Boom, Boom.

Exeunt soldiers U. E. Fifty remain mounting guard. As the soldiers are marching out just as Boom is about to follow he goes up to FRITZ.

BOOM. Ugh! a disgrace to the service. [Exit.

FRITZ (*alone*). That's another clever trick, coming and making faces at a poor young soldier, who can't answer his general. I declare I can't understand some things. To see a lot of generals, with all sorts of promotions and honours, fancying that's all they want to please the women. Not a bit of it. It turns out they prefer the young soldier with no promotion at all, but a pleasant way with him. So the old general begins to badger the young soldier; and that's how it is, and that's how it will be to the end of the chapter—and all along of the girls—and nothing else. (*Turning his head to the left.*) Ah, here she comes—here comes little Wanda. She thought I was coming after her—I wish I could—and seeing that I didn't she's coming after me. Here she comes (*Enter WANDA L. and remains a moment looking on*), oh would not it rile the general to see this now.

DUO. WANDA and FRITZ.

WANDA (*still at a distance*). Here am I, Fritz—I've run so fast
That I declare I feel quite flurried.

(*Draws nearer.*) But by those stern looks on me cast
'Twould seem I need not thus have hurried.

Say why?
Reply.

FRITZ *points to his musket, then lays a finger on his lips as if to signify he must not speak while on sentry duty.* WANDA *approaches still nearer.*

Pray what mean, Sir, those airs displeasing,
I hither haste and find you freezing.
Say are you dumb, bold Grenadier
And must by signs hold conversation?

FRITZ.

I must obey the regulation,
On guard a sentry's voice none may hear.

[Crosses L.

WANDA, *drawing still nearer.*
Cease this nonsense or dread a scolding.
Your future spouse, Sir, when beholding
All other thoughts should disappear.
Speak! ere you feel my indignation.

[Threatens him with her nails.

FRITZ.

I can't indeed—the regulation
Bids me not budge one step from here.

ENSEMBLE.

I can't indeed—the regulation
&c. &c.

WANDA.

He answers no—the regulation
Bids him not budge one step from there.

[FRITZ crosses a

What if with tender glance appealing,
I said—"Awhile before me kneeling,

To breathe thy love come hither, dear ?"
Would you say no ?

FRITZ.

The regulation
Forbids me budge one step from here.

WANDA.

But say, made wildly fond by Cupid,
I should exclaim—"You dear old stupid.
Come kiss me quick and go, my dear,"
Would you dare slight my invitation ?

FRITZ.

Not I indeed—the regulation
'Gainst kissing has no rule severe.

WANDA.

I could have sworn the regulation
'Gainst kissing had no rule severe.

[FRITZ kisses her.

ENSEMBLE.

Oh ! hang the regulation,
And heigh ! then for love,
Spite of rule and regulation,
We'll no master have but love.

FRITZ.

Don't you think, having once begone, dear,
'Twere well to return to the cheer.

WANDA.

One kiss I said—enough of one, dear ;
Not two—that might strange appear.

FRITZ.

Just one wee kiss—

WANDA.

Learn moderation !

No, no.

[Takes up FRITZ's musket and imitates him.
The regulation

Against kissing is severe.

ENSEMBLE.

Oh ! hang the regulation,
And heigh ! then for love,
Spite of rule and regulation,
We'll no master have but love.

[FRITZ embraces WANDA again. At that moment GEN. BOOM
enters at back R., and bounds up with fury.

BOOM. Ha ! I've caught you, have I.

FRITZ (aside). We're in for it ! (Snatches his musket and paces
to and fro.)

WANDA. Oh ! Fritz, dear.

BOOM. My orders to you to keep guard here, the movement I
caused my army to execute, all was done to catch you out and I
have caught you out.

FRITZ. Well, now you ought to feel quite pleased for it's the first
time I ever knew any of your movements come to anything.

BOOM. Scoundrel! (*report of a gun heard without. WANDA falls into the arms of FRITZ.*)

WANDA (*screaming*). Ah!

FRITZ. Dearest Wanda! (*she faints in his arms and he continues to support her.*)

BOOM. What's that? I demand to know what that is?

FRITZ. An attack of the enemy perhaps. Won't you let me carry her back to her mother.

(*A second report is heard.*)

BOOM. Go—quick—and take great care of her.

FRITZ. There now, General—arn't it clear—now arn't it clear you're fond of her.

BOOM. Go, sir—go.

FRITZ (*to WANDA whom he is still supporting*). Come along, dearest, and have a little drop of Schnaps. (*Exeunt into the Can'teen. The report of firearms is again repeatedly heard. Enter BARON PUCK R. in a state of wild alarm and bent double.*)

PUCK. Oh, Boom, my dear friend!

BOOM. What has happened?

PUCK. Challenged by the sentry, and being absorbed in profound political combinations I neglected giving the pass-word, and so—

BOOM. Bang, bang, bing, bong!

PUCK. Bang, bang, bing, bong—they fired.

BOOM. It was their duty.

PUCK. Fortunately they missed.

BOOM. For that they shall be punished.

PUCK. What?

BOOM. I say they ought not to have missed you.

PUCK. Why, you wouldn't have had them—

BOOM. Speaking as a commanding officer, certainly—as a friend it would have pained me.

PUCK. Thank you.

BOOM. May I ask to what I am indebted for the honour of—

PUCK. A very delicate affair. You are aware it is our custom on the eve of a battle to neglect no means to *sput* up the troops, and rouse their enthusiasm.

BOOM. Just so.

PUCK. This time we have hit upon a device which I flatter myself is sufficiently ingenious.—The Grand Duchess is coming—

BOOM. I know it.

PUCK. She will stand here in the midst of her soldiers, and you will then offer to have the song of the regiment sung before her.

BOOM. Good.

PUCK. Her Highness will reply, "I know the song well," and then she'll sing it.

BOOM. Herself?

PUCK. Herself. And you, Rudolph, will take the second.

BOOM. I! what an honour; but does she really know it?

PUCK. Perfectly; we rehearsed it for two hours this very morning.

BOOM. Good! it's a settled affair then.

PUCK. Quite. Now for a word or two on our own private matters—(*offers Boom a pinch of snuff.*) Do you do anything in this line?

BOOM. Not with that stuff! (*Draws a double-barrelled pistol from his belt, fires off both barrels in the air, and placing the pistol under his nose, a smoking barrel to each nostril, vigorously sniffs up the smell of powder.*) That's my mixture!

PUCK (*taking snuff*). You know why we are going to war.

BOOM. I? not an atom.

PUCK. Then I'll tell you. The Grand Duchess, our Sovereign, and my pupil—for I have been her preceptor (*takes his hat off and looking at it utters a cry of terror*)—Gracious Heaven! look there!

BOOM. What is it?

PUCK. Look—look—a bullet-hole!

BOOM. Come, that wasn't such a bad shot.

PUCK. It's given me such a turn. What a blessing I had my hat on—I should have been a dead man.

BOOM. Put it on again directly.

PUCK. Ah, true, they might fire again. Well, the Grand Duchess, our Sovereign and my pupil, is in her twentieth year. Up to the present time she has left the power of the State in our hands, but of late I have observed about her certain tokens of uneasiness—of pre-occupation. Said I, "That young person is beginning to feel bored with existence, her mind must be diverted, I declared war, and there you have it.

BOOM. Ingenious—very!

PUCK. Eh? Divert the mind has always been my maxim in dealing with my pupil. First with toys when she was a child; later other means had to be devised. It was to divert her mind that I sought her a husband.

BOOM. Prince Paul?

PUCK. Precisely; but that unhappy Prince produced no impression. True, I selected him on account of his utter harmlessness. For six months she has kept him dangling. Last week his father, the Elector of Steis-Stein-Steis Langen-Hosen Schorstenburg charged one of his principal officers, Baron Grog, with a mission to persuade our amiable sovereign to pronounce the desiderated affirmative. Our amiable sovereign distinctly refused to receive Baron Grog, and she continues to feel life a bore. Let us hope that war will cheer up her spirits.

BOOM. Rely on me for that.

PUCK. Unfortunately that resource will soon be exhausted. The Princess is in her twentieth year; she will discover that the world has other pleasures, her heart is scatheless as yet, but who knows how long it may remain so.

BOOM. You alarm me!

PUCK. Have you ever reflected on our probable fate were the Grand Duchess to lose her heart to some gay gallant?

BOOM. We should be nowhere. That must be prevented.

PUCK. It must!

BOOM. It must! (*Drums heard at some distance. Enter NEPOMUC, R. U. E. BOOM rushes towards him*). The enemy? say is it the enemy?

NEPO. It is not the enemy, General, but Her Highness who is approaching.

BOOM. 'Tis well, Sir; order the troops under arms.

NEPO. Yes, General.

[*Exit. R. U. E.*

PUCK. You understand our plans, lull her to-day with the charms of the regimental song, a week hence dazzle her with the glories of victory—

BOOM. Then return to our hearths and homes.

PUCK. And share the power of the State.

BOOM. And share the power of the State.

The army marches in from R. U. E., headed by drums and bugles, and form across the stage diagonally. Peasant girls enter from both sides

WANDA among them, and take up a position on the rising ground behind the soldiers. FRITZ is in the ranks of the army. Enter the GRAND DUCHESS with her maids of honour, IZA, OLGA, AMELIA, and CHARLOTTE, and NEPOMUC with the staff of the GRAND DUCHESS.

CHORUS.

Carry arms, present arms,
Eyes right, attention there;
None in grace and beauty's charms
With our Grand Duchess can compare;
Carry arms! Present arms!

RONDO.

GRAND D. Ah! I doat on the military,
With their uniforms so bright,
Their moustaches and trappings light
Ah! I doat on the military,
Their dauntless mien; their manners airy;
In all I delight!

When I view my troopers rare,
With martial fire animated,
Eyes right, attention there!
By Jove! with pride I'm all elated,
Whether or not they'll thrash the foe
I cannot tell, but this I know,

CHORUS.

GRAND D. But this she knows
This I know,
That I doat on the military, &c.

Could I have my little way
I'd enlist as a vivandière,
Their wants tending all the day,
With drink I'd make them gay!
Then brave as steel and light as air,
To the fight I'd march away,
If war would seem such fun when there.
I cannot tell, but this I'll say,
This she'll say,

CHORUS.
GRAND D. Yes, this I'll say,
That I doat on the military, &c., &c.

THE ARMY. Hurrah for the Grand Duchess.

GRAND D. (*To BOOM*). General, I am gratified, highly gratified.
(*Advances a few paces, then stops fixing her gaze on FRITZ.*) General?
BOOM. Your Highness.

GRAND D. Let that soldier step forward.

BOOM (*Calling the soldier to the right of FRITZ*). Schwarz?

GRAND D. No, not that one, not Schwarz.

BOOM (*Calling the one on the other side*). Schumacker?

GRAND D. No, not Schumacker, the other (*BOOM points to FRITZ*).
Now you're right.

BOOM. Private Fritz—three paces forward.

GRAND D. (*To FRITZ*). What is your name?

FRITZ. Fritz.

GRAND D. Name your campaigns—the number and nature of your wounds.

FRITZ. No campaigns—no wounds—yes, once climbing over a wall to get at some apples I slightly—but I suppose that don't count—no—no wounds.

GRAND D. You are only a private ?

FRITZ. Only a private.

GRAND D. I promote you to be a corporal.

FRITZ. A corporal! (*He moves a few steps as if going up to WANDA who is in the front rank among the peasant girls.*)

BOOM (*Stopping him*). Hollo! Thunder and oons !

FRITZ. Very good—very good (*returns to his position*)

GRAND D. Where were you going, my man ?

FRITZ. To tell my young woman I was made a corporal.

GRAND D. Oh, indeed ! Well—(*pausing*)

BOOM. Well ?

GRAND D. You may tell your young woman then that you are a sergeant. (*To BOOM.*) Give the word to dismiss, general.

BOOM. Dismiss ! (*The soldiers obey.*) And be off with you.

GRAND D. Why should they be off. Are they not my soldiers—my children ?

PUCK (*Aside to the GRAND D.*). Capital ! your Highness, capital !

GRAND D. (*To the soldiers*). Stay here, my friends, and let us have a friendly gossip.

[*The soldiers gather together towards the centre, the peasant girls come down and disperse themselves on either side, WANDA being foremost among those to the left. The GRAND DUCHESS sits on a drum brought by a canteen woman and the maids of honour sit by her side on camp stools brought to them by some of the soldiers. PUCK goes over to BOOM and FRITZ after having laid aside his musket comes down R.*]

PUCK (*Aside to BOOM*). Did you observe the marked way in which her Highness fixed her gaze on that soldier ?

BOOM. I did, but you can't of course suppose—

PUCK. We are to suppose every thing. As her Highness's preceptor I allowed her to get into the habit of pleasing herself in everything.

BOOM. The deuce you did ;—then we must keep our eye on her.

PUCK. We must.

GRAND D. (*Turning to FRITZ*). Come a little nearer, my man.

FRITZ. Your Highness ?

PUCK (*Aside to BOOM*). There, there she goes again.

BOOM (*Aside to PUCK*). I observe (*looking at FRITZ*); as for you, I'll be one with you before long.

GRAND D. And is your young woman pleased at your promotion ?

FRITZ. Delighted.

GRAND D. And you—and your comrades—are you contented ?

FRITZ. Well, you see your Highness, that's according—a man's contented and he isn't—that's nature.

GRAND D. Well fed ?

FRITZ. Well—yes—not bad—plenty of potatoes—pretty well fed though all the same.

GRAND D. Officers behave well to their men ?

FRITZ. Yes, the officers are very well, some good and some bad ; but the general—he does come down hard on us,

GRAND D. Indeed ?

BOOM. Your Highness—

GRAND D. Let the man speak,

FRITZ. He does come down hard does the general—but I know why—it's all along of the girls—that's what it is.

GRAND D. How so?

BOOM. I really can't allow—

GRAND D. General Boom, I desire you will let the man speak. You were saying, my man?

FRITZ. General's very hard—because he made up to my young woman and she sent him about his business.

GRAND D. Bless me—why every one seems in love with your young woman? Is she so very pretty then?

FRITZ. There is the party herself a standing out there.

GRAND D. Call her hither.

FRITZ. Here, Wanda. She's shy you see. Come along. They're timorsome creatures—not like us young soldiers.

WANDA *advances and stands before the GRAND DUCHESS.*

GRAND D. And so this great tall fellow loves you, eh?

WANDA. I think so.

GRAND D. And you love him?

WANDA. Oh, that I'm sure of.

GRAND D. Indeed! (*aside*) Bless me! I never felt like this before. (*To FRITZ.*) Did I inform you, that you were a lieutenant?

GRAND D. *rises and the maids of honour also.* WANDA *returns to her place.*

FRITZ. No, your Highness.

GRAND D. Well, now I inform you of it. (*General amazement.*)

FRITZ. And I say much obliged.

PUCK (*aside to Boom*). She's going a pretty pace!

BOOM (*aside to PUCK*). Don't fret. To-morrow I'll put that lieutenant well in front of the battle.

GRAND D. The heat is very oppressive. (*To the maids of honour.*) Ladies, wouldn't you like something to quench your thirst?

IZA. That we should, your Highness.

GRAND D. And so should I.

PUCK (*fussily*). Quick, some lemonade—ices.

GRAND D. Lemonade! ices!—nonsense—I wish to drink what my soldiers drink.

BOOM. But your Highness they drink—

GRAND D. What the canteen woman pours out for them I suppose. (*addressing a vivandière L.*) This way, vivandière, and pour me out a glass (*the vivandière comes forward and fills a small glass of brandy*)—fill to the brim! Soldiers! here's victory and a speedy return! (*She empties off her glass. The other vivandière pour out glasses for the maids of honour.*)

ALL. Long live the Grand Duchess.

PUCK (*aside to Boom*). My pupil's getting on.

BOOM (*aside to PUCK*). I think now she's about ripe for the song.

PUCK. You're right.

BOOM (*Advancing towards the GRAND D.*). As your Highness has condescended to beguile a few moments among your faithful troops, perhaps your Highness might not object to hear the regimental song?

GRAND D. Ah, a good thought (*looks approvingly at PUCK*). General the song is one I know well.

BOOM. Indeed your Highness.

GRAND D. And if you've no objection I'll sing it myself.

BOOM. Oh, your Highness?

GRAND D. We'll strike up at once.

BOOM (*getting up his voice to sing*). La, la, la!

GRAND D. Are you going to sing it with me?

BOOM. If your Highness will condescend to allow me.

GRAND D. You a general-in-chief! Out of the question! It would ruin your authority. (*To FRITZ.*) Come here my man—you shall sing it with me.

BOOM. Surely your Highness will not—

GRAND D. I beg your pardon—

BOOM. A mere lieutenant sing with—

GRAND D. If the rank of lieutenant is too humble, I make him a captain. Is that high enough?

[WANDA delighted crosses to FRITZ whom she appears to congratulate.

GRAND D. This way, gallant captain; and we will sing together.

[*The maids of honour come down the stage, and place themselves, two to the R. and two to the L. FRITZ drawn close to the GRAND D. Some of the peasant girls come forward.*

THE REGIMENTAL SONG.

I.

GRAND D.

Oh! what a gallant reg-i-ment
Is this regiment—the Grand Duchess's own!

FRITZ.

Whene'er to catch the foe they're sent
On their nob's don't they just rattle down.

GRAND D.

Some say the Hussars ain't so bad
And show more than one tidy lad.

FRITZ.

With 's 'elmet of steel polish'd bright
The drag-oon makes a purty sight.

GRAND D.

All know in the Artilleree
Brave boys you as any may see.

FRITZ.

But none can e'en a rushlight hold
To the reg-i-ment you now behold.

Whack-row-de-dow!

GRAND D.

Whack row-de-dow-row-de-dow—

How are you now!

ENSEMBLE.

Then let the drums all rattle
And let all the trumpets ring
We'll sing the God of Battles
The God of Love we'll sing.

GRAND D.

Oh what a gallant reg-i-ment
Is this regiment—the Grand Duchess's own.

FRITZ.

By honour rul'd in sentiment
It's lass as Victory by name is known

GRAND D.

Wheree'er its standard proud 's unfurl'd
In any quarter of the world,

FRITZ.

It makes the girls all beam with smiles
The men it howsomedever riles.

GRAND D.

But when again they're all en route
On t'other leg you find the boot,

FRITZ.

It makes the men all beam with smiles
The girls it howsomedever riles.

ENSEMBLE.

Then let the drums all rattle.

Enter NEPOMUC, R. U. E.

NEPO. Your Highness—your Highness.

GRAND D. Well, what's the matter?

BOOM. I hope this time at least, Sir, you have come to announce the enemy.

NEPO. I wish you wouldn't always say that. (*To the GRAND DUCHESS*). Prince Paul your Highness has advanced as far as the outposts, accompanied by Baron Grog, and desires to be furnished with the pass-word that he may reach your Highness.

GRAND D. Prince Paul—what again!

NEPO. What answer shall I give?

GRAND D. Oh—there—go and fetch Prince Paul, and bring him here. As for Baron Grog, I don't want to hear of him. I have refused to receive him, and receive him I shall not. (*NEPOMUC exits.*) Gallant captain away and return in your uniform. I want to see how you will look in it.

FRITZ. I shall look superb!

(*Exit F. E. R.*)

GRAND D. (*To the soldiers.*) Now my men you may go. By-and-by I shall see you again for the last time before you repair to the field of battle. [*Soldiers exeunt singing the Regimental song. BOOM shows the maids of honour into his tent. Two soldiers remain mounting guard at the back. Peasant girls go off up the declivity, R. and L., WANDA exits L.*]

GRAND D. My worthy preceptor, remain within call, and you too general. Presently we will examine your plan of operation.

BOOM. Your Highness will find it without a flaw.

GRAND D. I am willing to believe so. Go until I send for you. (*PUCK and BOOM exeunt into tent, the GRAND D. takes a seat.*) Prince Paul! now he's grown more insupportable to me than ever.

[*Enter R. U. E. PRINCE PAUL, dressed as a bridegroom, with a large bouquet of orange flowers in his coat. NEPOMUC ushers him in and points out the GRAND DUCHESS.*]

PRINCE P. (*Advancing shambling and downcast towards the GRAND D.*) Well your Highness this is not the happy day yet.

GRAND D. Why, Prince, what on earth is the meaning of that costume?

PRINCE P. Ah! you have deigned to notice it. It is the costume of a bridegroom, I put it on thinking it might move you to make up your mind.

GRAND D. What! to marry you to-day? Impossible, my dear Prince. I've too much on my hands—a plan of military operations to settle, an army on the point of departure—impossible I can ever find time to get married.

PRINCE P. Your Highness is never at a loss for excellent reasons.

GRAND D. Well, you admit they are excellent?

PRINCE P. Yes, but for six months I've had nothing else, I've lived on excellent reasons, and this very morning Baron Grog, that worthy but rejected messenger of love, has received a letter from papa.

GRAND D. And what says your papa in that letter?

PRINCE P. He says he's nearly had enough of it. It's six months since I left to get married, all which time he's made me a handsome allowance, and all which time I've spent my allowance and never married anybody. So the old gentleman says he's had enough of it and wants to know how it's to end.

GRAND D. Does he, indeed?

PRINCE P. Yes, because if it's not to come off with you, he could turn me on to another Grand Duchess.

GRAND D. Make the Elector's mind easy, the marriage is sure to come off—one of these fine days.

PRINCE P. That's what you always say. My marriage has been announced to all the foreign courts; the world has its eye upon me and no doubt begins to think I cut a very ridiculous figure.

GRAND D. Well, to be sure, if the world has its eye on you at this particular minute—

PRINCE P. Yes, and there's another thing that hurts my feelings even more.

GRAND D. What in the world may that be?

PRINCE P. (*Takes a small foreign looking paper from his pocket.*) Look there!

GRAND D. What's this?

PRINCE P. A newspaper printed at Hamburgh in which my name is mentioned.

GRAND D. You don't say so.

PRINCE P. Positively, it's a fact. A set of scoundrelly fellows have sprung up who take upon themselves to write and publish all sorts of things about every thing and everybody in what they call journals, and people call them journalists, and monstrous to relate they not only go into public matters, but into the private lives of individuals and what's worse than all they have gone into my private life. Just listen to this now:

“To wed the pearl of all Princesses,
 Prince Paul set forth upon his way.
 But it would seem that nothing presses,
 The wedding's for another day.
 Now ev'ry morning, ere 'tis light yet,
 Prince Paul puts on the whitest kids.
 “Is it to day?” “Oh, no, not quite yet.”
 Of gloves the Prince his hands then rids.
 Prince Paul's endurance seems eternal,
 He pines—but breathes not yea or nay.”
 Of me that's what those fellows say
 In that confounded Hamburgh journal.

GRAND D.

From truth they're never wide astray,
 Those writers in the Hamburgh journal.

[*Crosses R., laughing.*

PRINCE P. Oh! but that's not all, there's some more.

[*reads.*

II.

“The Prince was quite an ardent lover.
 To woo this Princess when he came,
 The Prince with love was all a-flame.
 So fierce his flame, to put it mildly,
 Since now six months, or thereabouts,
 His passion has been blazing wildly,
 It surely now must be burnt out,

Prince Paul, take this advice paternal,
Pack up and homeward wend your way."
Of me that's what those fellows say
In that confounded Hamburg journal.

GRAND D.

From truth they're never wide astray,
Those writers in the Hamburg journal.

[GRAND D. *laughs more immoderately than ever.*

PRINCE P. Now it's very wicked of you to laugh.

Enter FRITZ in the uniform of a Captain R. F. E.

FRITZ. Here I am according to orders.

GRAND D. Oh! I vow it sets him off wonderfully! (*To PRINCE PAUL*) Look at him, Prince, and tell me what you think of him.

PRINCE P. A well-limb'd fellow, egad!

GRAND D. Is it not a proud thing to command men such as that?
(*to FRITZ*) Gallant captain?

FRITZ. Your Highness.

GRAND D. Enter that tent and inform General Boom and Baron Puck that we await their presence.

FRITZ. Well, I've no objection.

[*Enters the tent.*

PRINCE P. Your Highness.

GRAND D. Again! What now?

PRINCE P. You haven't given me an answer.

GRAND D. What answer can I give you? The very first occasion the cares of government leave me one moment to bestow on the thought of my future happiness, I shall avail myself of it to marry you. Until then I recommend you patience.

PRINCE P. That's the way I'm continually fubbed off.

GENERAL BOOM, BARON PUCK, and FRITZ enter from the tent. Several soldiers bring a table out of the canteen, and four seats. They place the table in the middle of the stage, a little to the left, and arrange the seats as follows: two to the left, one to the right, and one in the middle. A map is spread out on the table. The soldiers then retire.

GRAND D. We are about to examine General Boom's plan o operations. (*To PRINCE PAUL.*) May we hope, Prince, you will enlighten us with your observations?

PRINCE P. (*sulkily*). Oh! if you wish it.

GRAND D. What! cross? Oh naughty!

PRINCE P. (*still sulky*). It's because you always make me stop while you're holding council.

GRAND D. And isn't it quite natural? As my future consort are you not entitled to all the privileges—?

PRINCE P. No, you don't refuse me any of the political privileges of my position, but there are others—

GRAND D. (*bridling up*). Pray what is your meaning, Prince?

PRINCE P. (*aside*). There, now, I'm silenced—hang my confounded timidity. (*Retires to the L. The GRAND DUCHESS seats herself on the first seat to the left of the table.*)

GRAND D. (*Being seated*). Gentlemen be seated. (*Boom takes the seat facing the table and Puck that to the right. To FRITZ*) Captain (*Boom signs to him to retire*), you will guard our person.

FRITZ Let any one touch you that's all! (*Draws his sword and paces to and fro across the stage down.*) (*Boom and Puck betray vexation and exchange glances.*)

BOOM (*Glances at FRITZ*). Really I don't know whether I ought to develop my plans—

GRAND D. Don't trouble yourself about that, general, but proceed.

BOOM. Nothing can be more simple, your Highness. You see the art of war may be summed up in two words—to cut off and to wrap up—

GRAND D. Like a slice of plum cake then?

BOOM. Precisely your Highness. Now in order to enable me to cut off and wrap up this is what I do—I divide my army into three Corps.

PUCK. Good!

BOOM (*Pointing to different parts of the map*). One will push forward to the right.

PAUL. Good!

BOOM. Another to the left.

PUCK. Good!

BOOM. And the third in the middle.

PAUL. Good!

BOOM. Thus disposed my forces will proceed by three different routes to one central point upon which I have decided to concentrate them. Now, where that point is to be I don't know, but what I know is that I shall thrash the enemy (*with violent emphasis*), thrash them soundly!

GRAND D. Pray contain yourself.

PUCK. General, I entreat you.

BOOM. I tell you I'll thrash them soundly!

GRAND D. I don't say you won't; but you really will do yourself some injury.

BOOM. It's for my country's sake (*Rising and drawing his sword*). The enemy! Where's the enemy? Lead me to the enemy! (*Puck calms him down and induces him to resume his seat.*)

FRITZ (*Standing still and chuckling satirically*). Aren't you going to meet him presently, general, and by three different routes?

PUCK. Hold your tongue, Sir.

FRITZ (*Still chuckling*). Three routes! Three routes! Three routes! What a delicious joke!

BOOM (*Furious*). What's that he says?

FRITZ. Three routes! Why its downright tomfoolery!

PRINCE P. Well, I never!

BOOM. I'll have you shot, Sir!

PUCK. Use such language to the general!

GRAND D. One moment's silence if you please, gentlemen. (*To FRITZ*) You were observing, I think, captain, that General Boom's plan was downright tomfoolery.

FRITZ. Of course, and I'll prove it (*Approaches the table*).

PUCK. Allow me respectfully to submit to your Highness that this person has no voice in the council.

BOOM. Certainly not!

PUCK. Only a commanding officer—

PRINCE P. And a nobleman—

BOOM. He's no voice!

PUCK. Positively none!

GRAND D. Silence, gentlemen! As I'm an honest woman, the first man who speaks without my leave, off goes his head. You said, I think, that to have a voice in the council he should be a commanding officer. I make him a general (*to Boom*) as you are. He ought to be

noble—I create him Baron Vermuth von-Boch-Bier, Count Tschalkscoren Vergiss-Mein-Nicht! Is there any other requisite, gentlemen, to entitle him to a voice in the council?

BOOM. Your Highness—

PRINCE P. (*Aside to PUCK, who has crossed over to him*). I say, I say, this won't do, this won't do!

PUCK (*aside*). Hush! We'll talk anon. (*Retires to the back*. BOOM crosses R.)

GRAND D. (*resuming her seat and addressing FRITZ*). General, take a seat, and let us hear what you have to say. (PUCK *fussily points to the seat previously occupied by BOOM, and he and PRINCE PAUL resume their seats*.)

FRITZ (*seating himself*). Instead of marching on the enemy by three routes—

GRAND D. (*examining his uniform*). This collar is just a trifle too high; it wants a good quarter of an inch off to free the neck. There, go on, my friend, don't let me interrupt you. (*Aside*.) What a handsome fellow it is!

FRITZ. I was saying that the right way was to march straight upon the enemy; one route will do, and then, when we've got at him, me and the other lads,—bang away with all our might—keep banging. banging away, and the business is settled. [FRITZ rises.

GRAND D. Excellent! General Boom, that is the plan upon which you'll conduct the campaign.

BOOM (*going up to FRITZ*). I shall do nothing of the kind!

GRAND D. How?

BOOM. I am responsible to your Highness for the blood spilt by your soldiers. Follow my plan—it's a safe thing—no engagement is possible; follow his, and I can answer for nothing.

GRAND D. Then you decline?

BOOM. I decline; let your friend the Baron there—I forget how your Highness styled him—

FRITZ. Baron von Vermuth-Boch-Bier Count Tschalkscoren Vergiess-Mein-Nicht. (*To the GRAND D.*) He heard well enough—that's all his game—that is!

BOOM. Let the Baron carry out his own plan if he pleases.

FRITZ. By all means, I'm quite ready.

GRAND D. What—and you'll win the battle?

FRITZ. Either that or lose it—same as any other man.

GRAND D. Baron von Vermuth-Boch-Bier.

FRITZ. Your Highness?

GRAND D. May the protection of Heaven favour your arms. Henceforward you are the Commander-in-Chief of my armies.

FRITZ to BOOM. By your leave, you must please to moult those feathers.

BOOM. A thousand furies! (PUCK calms him down, takes the plume off his hat and sticks it into FRITZ's. BOOM disconsolately replaces it with the simple plume worn by FRITZ.)

FRITZ (*Addressing BOOM*). Ugh! you're a disgrace to the service.

BOOM (*About to rush upon him*). Ha!

PUCK (*Crossing L. of BOOM*). Restrain your anger—there are three of us thirsting for vengeance, and vengeance we'll have.

GRAND D. (*Contemplating FRITZ*). Upon my honour he looks splendid, positively splendid. General Fritz, I will forthwith present you to the army as their new Commander-in-Chief. General Boom, order the entire strength of my army under arms.

BOOM. I submit to orders ! (*Soldiers come forward and remove table and seats.*)

PUCK. Obey—her heart is touched—my fears are realized.

BOOM. (*Goes up the stage, gives a signal, and comes down again same side. A military command is heard without passing from mouth to mouth. Soldiers enter at both R. Drums roll. They take their arms and form in two ranks at back facing the audience. Drummers at the head L. NEPOMUC precedes them and stands on a level with second entrance a table behind the GRAND DUCHESS. The maids of honour come out of the tent and place themselves in front L. The peasant girls come in at back from both sides and stand part R. part L. and part on the declivity. WANDA enters L. and stands a little behind FRITZ. PAUL joins PUCK and BOOM, who are standing at the entrance R. Vivandières are standing at the head of their respective pelotons.*)

FINALE.

CHORUS.

On the field of strife soon you'll find us
Where cannons roar ;
Just casting one fond look behind us
On to the fore !

RECITATIVE.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Pray listen all, while I, your sovereign, address you,
(*Pointing to FRITZ*) Behold your commander-in-chief !

CHORUS.

He ! our commander-in-chief !

GRAND DUCHESS.

Yes, my men, and with this I'd impress you,
He'll come out strong—that's my belief.

[*Presents FRITZ to the soldiers, then to the maids of honour, who curtsy to him.*]

PRINCE PAUL, BOOM, and PUCK, *aside R.*

All three for dear vengeance uniting

No risk we'll run.

Jolly odds in our favour are fighting,

We're three to one.

WANDA (*to FRITZ coming down the stage to him.*)
A commander-in-chief !

FRITZ.

Just so, as you observe,

WANDA.

Poor me you'll quite forget,

FRITZ.

From my troth I'll ne'er swerve.

WANDA.

Say, will you love me still ?

FRITZ.

Yes indeed, love, I will.

WANDA.

Oh ! those dear words repeat.

FRITZ.

As often as you will.

GRAND DUCHESS *to FRITZ and WANDA impatiently.*
 When you have quite done that private *tête-a-tête*.
 It may strike you, perhaps, that your pleasure I wait.

CHORUS. *Sotto voce.*

See! she eyes them askance,
 With wild rage in her glance.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Why, at their sight, all this emotion?

Why beats my heart beyond restraint?

Seeing that girl, what secret notion

All in a flutter sets my nerves. Oh, I shall faint.

(Aside.) But as a Queen whate'er I feel,

My dignity maintaining,

All impulse weak restraining,

All signs of emotion I now must conceal.

[Aloud to NEPOMUC, who comes down to her L.

Away and bring me on the spot

That same thing whereof you wot.

[Exit NEPOMUC R. GRAND DUCHESS beckons to FRITZ to approach.

ALL.

What can be her meaning?

Enter NEPOMUC with a sword holding it aloft solemnly and reverentially.

ALL.

The sabre!

GRAND DUCHESS *to FRITZ, pointing to the sword.*

Lo, here the sabre of my sire!

Take thou and hang it at thy side.

High does thy valiant soul aspire,

Well may this sword become thy pride!

Erst when to battle Pa was starting,

If his own words may be believed,

From my dear mother, ere departing,

This dreadful weapon he received.

Lo, here the sabre of my sire!

Take thou and hang it at thy side.

CHORUS.

Lo, here the sabre of her sire!

Take thou and hang it at thy side.

GRAND DUCHESS *takes the sword.*

Lo, here the sabre of my sire!

Take thou and hang it at thy side.

Thy star I fear not, trusting rather

Thee well and hearty home 'twill guide;

For in the battle should'st thou perish,

I very much begin to doubt

If I——by all that most I cherish,

I had well nigh let something out!

[Recovering her self-possession.

Lo, here the sabre of my sire!

Take thou and hang it at thy side

CHORUS.

Lo, here, the sabre of her sire !
Take thou and hang it at thy side.

FRITZ.

To my hands you may trust, fearless what may befall,
The sabre so revered of your late lamented father,
A victor I'll return, or not return at all!

GRAND DUCHESS.

A victor you'll return.

BOOM, PUCK, and PRINCE PAUL.
He'll not return at all.

CHORUS.

A victor he'll return.

BOOM, PUCK, and PRINCE PAUL.
He'll not return at all.

CHORUS.

He'll return.

BOOM, PUCK, and PRINCE PAUL.
Not at all !

FRANTIC CHORUS.

FRITZ.

Victor, I'll come back,
Pluck since I don't lack,
My artiller-y,
And my cavalry,
And my infantry—
No fellows can stand
'Gainst such a brave band—
Soon we'll send the foe
All to Jericho.
Their plans we'll forestal,
Their troops we'll appal,
On their backs we'll fall,
Back their troops they'll call,
We'll pursue them all,
Cut them up quite small,
Till we've reached their soil.
We will forward spring,
Then plunder and despoil,
Spare no mortal thing.

BROOM, PUCK, and PRINCE PAUL.

He will ne'er come back,
All his troops they'll hack.
His artiller-y,
And his cavalry,
And his infantry,
Their jackets they'll dust,
Their boilers they'll bu'st;
He'll be by his foe
Sent to Jericho.
His plans they'll forestal,
His troops they'll appal,
On his back they'll fall,
Back his troops he'll call,
They'll pursue them all,
Cut them up quite small,
Till they've reached our soil.
They will forward spring,
Then plunder and despoil,
Spare no mortal thing.

THE OTHERS.

Victor he'll come back
Pluck since he don't lack,
His artilleree,
And his cavalree,
And his infantree
No fellow can stand
'Gainst such a brave band;
Soon he'll send the foe
All to Jericho,
Their plans he'll forest'

Their troops he'll appal,
On their backs he'll fall.
Back their troops they'll call,
He'll pursue them all,
Cut them up quite small,
Till he's reach'd their soil.
Forward he will spring
Then plunder and despoil
Spare no mortal thing.

GRAND CHORUS.

Play up a lively measure,
 March away, tra, la, la ;
 As on a trip of pleasure,
 Singing heigh ! tra, la, la,
 Away, away, march away !

THE GRAND DUCHESS (*seeing the sword left in the hands of WANDA.*
 Stay you forget—the sabre of my sire !

CHORUS.

You had forgot the falchion of her father !

[FRITZ returns to take the sword and hastens back to the head of his troops, brandishing it in the air. The soldiers march up the hill at both sides drums beating. The GRAND DUCHESS and WANDA waft kisses towards FRITZ who returns those of WANDA. TABLEAU. CURTAIN.]

ACT II.

SCENE.—*An apartment in the palace. A door R. leading into the GRAND DUCHESS'S apartments. Near the second entrance R. is a secret door concealed by a picture representing a knight in full armour. Another picture L. facing the former. A door L. towards the front. At back folding doors.*

SCENE I., &c.—IZA, CHARLOTTE, AMELIE, OLGA, and o'her Maids of Honour in a row at work, then NEPOMUC. An Usher guards the apartments of the GRAND DUCHESS on the right.

CHORUS OF MAIDS OF HONOUR.

The cruel war at last is o'er,
 And ended quite is their campaign ;
 Each lass will now behold once more,
 Ere night appear, her faithful swain.

IZA (*looking to the left and rising, as also the other Maids of Honour*).

Here's the post ! run, ladies, quick to meet him,
 And for his pains with welcome greet him.

NEPOMUC (*entering by the left, holding letters, goes in the midst*).
 Who wants a letter ? Quickly say.

[*Another Usher enters by the left and carries the tapestry frame.*]

ALL. Come this way, good Sir, come this way.

[NEPOMUC, distributing the letters.

NEPO. Quickly say.

ALL. Take them, pray.

NEPO. (*going to the door at the right, to the Usher*).

To yield me passage lift all latches,
 Make way for the Grand Duchess's private despatches.

[NEPOMUC exits to the right, the Usher following him.]

CHARLOTTE, IZA, AMELIE, OLGA (*each her letter in her hand*).

ENSEMBLE.

Ere rent thy seal how beats each heart ?
Missive dear penned by a fond lover ;
What fond delight to steal a part,
And con each dear word of thee over.

OLGA (*opening and reading her letter*).

"I placed o'er my heart the portrait you gave me
When we parted, duck ;
From many a wound I knew it would save me,
Just in that place stuck.
Without e'en a scratch if back soon you'll have me
'Twas that brought me luck."

[*Embracing her letter.*]

Ah ! letter I treasure ;
All day with what pleasure
I'll read thee, nor miss
Each sentence to kiss !

AMELIE (*reading her letter*).

"It seems we shall cut short this war and bother,
So you'll see me back ;
And time being short, and one thing and t'other,
This is now my tack—
Directly I'm home I'll, seeking your mother,
Pop the question smack."
Ah ! letter I treasure ;
All day with what pleasure
I'll read thee, nor miss
Each sentence to kiss !

CHARLOTTE (*reading her letter*).

"I did not much like when fighting began, dear ;
At facing the fire I felt in a stew.
However I fought, I fought like a man, dear,
My courage came back when I thought of you."

IZA (*reading her letter*).

"We yesterday gave the foe a good dressing,
At least I opine ;
But what's that to me ? there's naught worth possessing
In the conq'ring line
Save that which I prize above every blessing—
One sweet kiss of thine."

ALL.

Ah ! letter I treasure ;
All day with what pleasure
I'll read thee, nor miss
Each sentence to kiss !

IZA (*to OLGA*). What is in your letter ?

OLGA. All sorts of things. And in yours ?

(IZA *shows her letter.*)

AMELIE (*to CHARLOTTE*). Oh ! if you only knew !

CHARLOTTE. Show me !

AMELIE. With all my heart, but you must show yours.

CHARLOTTE. That I will.

(*They show each other their letters.*)

OLGA (*who has read CHARLOTTE's letter*). Oh! that's the way he writes to you, is it?

IZA. Yes; and doesn't yours?

OLGA (*showing her letter*). So does mine. There—look—the part that is underlined.

[PRINCE PAUL and BARON GROG enter by the L.]

PRINCE P. Very well then, it's quite safe now. Good day, ladies. [*They salute him.*]

AMELIE (*laughing*). Good day, Prince Paul!

CHARLOTTE (*the same*). Poor Prince!

IZA (*the same*). Unfortunate Prince!

PRINCE P. (*to GROG*). They are poking fun at me.

GROG. I perceive they are.

PRINCE P. I'm not angry with them. Ladies, I have the honour to present to you Baron Grog, the envoy of Papa.

LADIES (*salute him*). Baron!

GROG (*saluting*). Ladies!

PRINCE P. I have a letter of audience for to-day.

IZA. For to-day?

PRINCE P. Yes, for to-day. Will you do the favour to announce to Her Highness that Baron Grog is arrived?

OLGA. But, your Highness, that does not concern us.

CHARLOTTE. You must address yourself to an aide-de-camp.

AMELIE. And here is one.

[*Enter NEPOMUC.*]

NEPO. Grand news, grand news—General Fritz is to have a public reception in the presence of the full court. He returns crowned with victory, and her Highness is so delighted—(*advances four paces*) so delighted (*advances another four paces*)—so very delighted. (*By this time he has crossed the stage and suddenly exits L.*)

AMELIE. There is one!

ISA (*delighted*). They're coming back—we shall see them again.

[BOOM and PUCK enter by the left. The Usher follows them and stops at the door.]

PUCK. Go quick, ladies, make haste; the Grand Duchess waits for you.

BOOM. Hasten, ladies.

[*Exit singing.*]

CHORUS OF MAIDS OF HONOUR.

Ah! letter I treasure;
All day with what pleasure
I'll read thee, nor miss
Each sentence to kiss!

[BOOM and PUCK make their obeisance to PRINCE PAUL.]

PRINCE P. Well, and how about my Grog?

PUCK. Make your mind easy, Prince—your Grog will be served up presently.

GROG. What!

BOOM. His Excellency means that an audience will be granted to the Baron. Usher, introduce his Excellency, Baron Grog to the presence of her Highness, and obey the instructions you have received, (*pointing to the door R.*) Baron.

GROG. General—your most obedient. (*Bows and advances towards the door.*)

PRINCE P. (*Following up*). Now's the time, Grog, be very impassioned and very insinuating, in fact be hot, strong, and sweet, Grog. (*Exit BARON GROG preceded by the USHER.*)

PRINCE P. (*Coming down between BOOM and PUCK with gesticulations of extreme joy.*) At last! gentlemen, at last!

PUCK. Come, come, Prince.

PRINCE P. Oh, my dear Baron, you don't know how overcome I am with emotion. She has consented to receive my Grog, he is now on his way to the presence chamber. I see him—there—don't you see him

BOOM. Certainly.

PRINCE P. He is passing through the first anti-chamber.

PUCK. Right.

PRINCE P. He turns to the left. (*PUCK and BOOM both shake their heads in denial.*) The hangings are drawn aside, he is in the presence.

BOOM. My dear Prince, you are going a great deal too fast, the Baron has not turned to the left, but to the right, and still preceded by the Usher, and he has come to the bottom of a flight of stairs, which by this time he must be ascending. Conducted through a suite of about twelve apartments to another flight of stairs which he will descend, he will traverse another suite of twelve apartments, re-ascend another flight of stairs, re-descend—

PUCK. Re-reascend.

PRINCE P. And re-redescend.

PUCK. And so on, up and down, until he reaches a little door which will be thrown wide open, discovering the Baron's carriage. The Usher will politely invite him to enter it and inform him that the audience is deferred to another day.

PRINCE P. And that's to be the order of proceeding?

BOOM. Precisely.

PRINCE P. And the Grand Duchess has had the audacity—

PUCK. She has. But really, Prince, you must be out of your senses. (*Checking himself.*) With all due respect, positively out of your senses to imagine that on the very day General Fritz returns, and returns crown'd with victory, the Grand Duchess can entertain any other thought than that of Fritzing her hair to receive him.

PRINCE P. Fritz again! curse that fellow!

BOOM. He will be here presently (*significantly*), and his triumph is assured.

PRINCE P. Well, it may, it may (*with sinister intention*)—but let him wait.

BOOM. } For what?

PUCK. }

PRINCE P. Nothing—nothing—gentlemen, I said nothing—I meant nothing. [*Goes up the stage.*]

PUCK (*Glancing at BOOM*). It doesn't take—

BOOM. We must tell him all. (*Cannon heard without. With frantic energy.*) The enemy! on to the enemy! (*He draws his sword and is about to rush off.*)

PUCK. No, no, it's not the enemy (*significantly*), it's *our* enemy
 PRINCE P. General Fritz has arrived.

BOOM. Pardon me, gentlemen, but my sword has been idle for a whole fortnight, and my soul yearns for the fray!

The hangings at the back are drawn aside and the entire court enter preceded by two USHERS.

GRAND CHORUS.

Our brave troops behold
 Returning glorious from the fray,
 On these heroes bold
 Let beauty smile this joyful day.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Now to see him once more! with suspense how I tremble.

Ah! when I meet his gaze can I my love dissemble?

[*The two USHERS bring on from the R. a ducal throne and a stool and place it a little to the R. They then retire to the back and stand on each side of the door.*

CHORUS repeated.

Our brave troops behold! &c.

[*While the chorus is being sung the GRAND DUCHESS seats herself in the throne surrounded by her maids of honour, FRITZ enters at the back followed by a brilliant staff. He advances towards the GRAND DUCHESS and bends his knee at the foot of her throne. She betrays strong emotion which she suppresses with difficulty. Chorus ends and FRITZ rises.*

FRITZ to the GRAND DUCHESS.

Four days, madam, suffic'd your enemies to lather,
 Your troops have won the day, the adversary's fled.
 Here safe I return to you, as I said,
 The falchion so rever'd of your lamented father.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Lo, here, the falchion of my father!

ALL.

Lo, here, the falchion of her father!

GRAND DUCHESS.

Let it be placed a glass case under
 In my museum.

NEPOMUC *takes the sword and exit with it R.*

To FRITZ.

And thou soldier, tired of war's alarms,
 Before my court aghast with wonder
 Recite the doughty deeds and exploits of your arms.

CHORUS.

Recite the doughty deeds and exploits of your arms.

FRITZ.

Well! you shall learn, your Royal Highness,
 How came about
 This awful route,
 And how I by my skill and slyness
 The foe surpris'd
 His troop capsiz'd.

RONDO.

All in good order, colours flying,
 Our troops march'd forth upon this **raid**
 Four days elaps'd before espying
 The foe in numbers strong array'd.
At once I made my army halt;
 My plan was laid,
 I'm not afraid
 That with it you'll find any fault—
 Without pretence
 One may have sense—
With some score thousand flasks supplied,
 Half of wine, half strong liqueur,
 What did I? Your ears open wide!
 I let the foe the whole secure.
What shouts soon thro' their camp resound!
 "Ho! there, more wine!
 Your health—here's mine!"
In rosy floods all sense is drown'd;
 Though I said nought
 The more I thought.
Next day with hope our spirit buoyed—
 Our challenge they accept to fight.
I saw them all in line deployed,
 But, oh! good lord, in what a plight!
All o'er the field you saw them straying,
 Staggering, slipping,
 Tumbling, tripping,
 Like a vast field of barley swaying,
 All ways inclin'd
 As blows the wind.
Heading this host of jolly toppers,
 Their noble chief, flame in his eyes,
Caper'd more drunken than his troopers.
 "What, ho! my buck," to me he cries,
I answer pat, "Come on, old lady?"
 Then like a shot
 The poor old sot,
At each step getting more unsteady,
 Across the field
 Fierce onward reel'd!
You would have held your sides with laughing
 To see this hero in his cups,
 Leading an army, laughing, chaffing,
 Sadly in want of "pick me ups."
Ah! ne'er was battle half such fun!
 If you made fall
 One, down came all.
As for the slain, there wasn't one.
 Fate was too kind,
 But never mind.
Bravely your troops, the whole sum tottle,
 Got through this most severe of tasks,
 Sleeping on this fam'd field of *bottle*,
 Where the dead men were empty flasks.

ALL. Long live General Fritz.

GRAND D. General receive my compliments, you speak as eloquently as you fight bravely. (*To the Court.*) Nobles and ladies, this

imposing ceremony being now concluded, and the weighty interests of the State requiring that I should impart to General Fritz certain matters which none but himself may hear, you have our permission to retire. Begone.

PRINCE P. (*In a suppressed tone to PUCK*). Alone tête-a-tête with him.

BOOM (*In a suppressed tone*). How she's going a-head!

PUCK (*In a suppressed tone*). And will you put up with this, Prince?

PRINCE P. (*In a suppressed tone*). If I could see my way to—

BOOM. Perhaps there is a way. (*This interchange of dialogue is very rapid.*)

GRAND D. Begone ladies and gentlemen of the Court, begone.

CHORUS.—“Our brave troops.”

[*The entire Court retires through the recess at the back. PRINCE PAUL, BOOM, and PUCK follow, all three arm in arm. The USHERS go out last and close up the hangings. The maids of honour, negroes, and pages retire R. The GRAND DUCHESS and FRITZ are left alone.*]

GRAND D. We are alone.

FRITZ. Yes, not a soul but ourselves.

GRAND D. General.

FRITZ. Your Highness.

GRAND D. I am delighted to see you.

FRITZ. Same here.

GRAND D. Thank you.

FRITZ. Don't mention it pray, don't mention it.

GRAND D. I applaud myself for what I have done. When my glance first rested on you, your position was that of a private soldier.

FRITZ. An obscure private.

GRAND D. I raised you to the rank of Commander-in-Chief, and you have beaten the enemy.

FRITZ. Well, ecosh!

GRAND D. Shall we talk of the rewards to which your services entitle you.

FRITZ. I've no objection, but what's the use.

GRAND D. How so?

FRITZ. Look here, let's talk to the point. Arn't I Commander-in-Chief. Very well, then, how can I be promoted? I can't go any higher.

GRAND D. That's your idea, is it?

FRITZ. Don't it stand to reason? I've got the plume, I can't go higher.

GRAND D. In the military department perhaps not, but—

FRITZ. Well?

GRAND D. In the grades of civil employment—

FRITZ. Oh—Ah! (*aside.*) I'm hanged if I'm not grounded now. Never mind; it's something to reward me, so it's all right.

GRAND D. A suite of apartments will be prepared for you in the palace. That was decided on this morning at the suggestion of General Boom.

FRITZ. General Boom suggested that!

GRAND D. It was an idea that came to him at my command.

FRITZ. How he must have fumed.

GRAND D. Should you like him sent into exile?

FRITZ. I—not in the least ! There's no harm in him at bottom.
(Laughs.) As for our little tiffs, it all comes of the girls—it's all the girls.

GRAND D. The girls ?

FRITZ. Nothing else.

GRAND D. Ah ! I suppose you get on pretty well—

FRITZ. Tolerably, thank you, and yourself—

GRAND D. You don't understand me ; I mean with the girls—

FRITZ. You mean with the—

GRAND D. Nothing, nothing ; never mind—

FRITZ. Oh ! very well.

GRAND D. How fortunate is the lowly rustic girl. When a lowly rustic girl loves a lowly rustic youth, she goes straight up to him and says—

FRITZ. Thee's taken my fancy, lad.

GRAND D. Accompanying her speech with a moderate nudge of her elbow. But in our sphere it's quite different. We must beat about the bush, drop distant hints. For instance, now there is a lady of my Court who is passionately enamoured of you.

FRITZ. A lady of the Court ! You're joking.

GRAND D. Well, instead of going straight up to you—

FRITZ. With a moderate nudge of her elbow—

GRAND D. She confessed her love to me.

FRITZ. To you ?

DUO.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Yes, gallant sir, a heart you've ensnared

At Court, the lady well is known,

Herself to state this, unprepared,

She has entreated me her passion deep to own.

FRITZ.

What ! Ask'd you ?—despite your high station ?

Towards you this lady then, no doubt,

Stands in most intimate relation,

For otherwise I can't at all the circumstance make out.

GRAND DUCHESS.

For her well-being I dearly care.

FRITZ.

Such condescension's rare ;

I thank you for my share.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Yes, I love her most sincerely.

FRITZ.

Well, this friend you love so dearly,

What said she now

Of me ; pray let me know, I long to hear ; I vow—

GRAND DUCHESS.

Thus said the friend I love so blindly :

“ Whene'er your eyes throw

On him, kindly

Say to him what so well you know.”

RONDO.

Say to him an impress he's made—

Ne'er to fade.

Say to him he's thought most enchanting,

Say to him he has but to pray,

None can say

What in reason one wouldn't be granting,

And rosy wreaths had he a mind

To mingle with his laurels glorious

In conquests of a gentler kind ;

This victor still might prove victorious.

Say to him, he e'en at first sight

Charm'd me quite.

Say to him, my wits he's upsetting,

Say to him, I think of him so,

Cruel foe!

Oh ! so much—idiotic I'm getting,

Alas my fate, one moment seal'd,

One glance, and no power could restore thee,

My heart I could not help but yield,

I felt that its Lord stood before me.

Say to him, unless he would make

One's heart break,

Say to him, for her mind I'm pleading,

Say to him, he'll not answer, nay,

Tell him, pray,

She who loves him hath beauty exceeding !

GRAND DUCHESS.

Now say, what answer make you pray ?

FRITZ.

I must mind what I say,

And prove no fool to-day.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Reply not long, sure, need it take you,

To this lady what answer make you ?

FRITZ.

Say to her that my heart is tender.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Every word I'll say.

FRITZ.

For her words my thanks I send her.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Every word I'll say.

FRITZ.

That with ardour my heart is burning.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Every word I'll say.

FRITZ.

Her politeness to be returning.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Every word I'll say

FRITZ.

All this I say ; but e'en though death await me,
 If aught I can twig,
 Dash my wig, dash my wig ;
 And may Old Nick this moment spiflicate me
 If I knew who can be this lady.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Speak, pray !

FRITZ.

Well, say—Well, say—
 Say to her that my heart is tender.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Every word I'll say.
 &c. &c.

ENSEMBLE.

GRAND DUCHESS.

My meaning at once he has caught,
 For the heart oft quickens the thought.

FRITZ.

Of this I understand just nought,
 Though a fool never yet was I thought.

[*The GRAND DUCHESS crosses and takes a seat. FRITZ goes up the stage, and returns reflecting to himself.*]

FRITZ. Hum ! All these honours and titles I now possess, including my plume ; if I want to keep them—and I do—this lady of the Court and friend of the Grand Duchess—I cannot do better than—

GRAND D. (*Watching his movements.*) General ?

FRITZ (*Still talking to himself*). But then there's Wanda—dear little Wanda—confoundedly bothering !

GRAND D. (*louder*). General ?

FRITZ. Your Highness.

GRAND D. Come nearer to me.

FRITZ. It's confoundedly bothering. *Is about to rest his knee on the stool at the feet of the GRAND DUCHESS.*

GRAND D. No—no—be seated—there. (*FRITZ sits down on the stool. She points to the orders on his breast*) How well those orders become you. If there are any others you would like to have, you have only to ask—but I am wandering. What was I saying ? Oh, that lady I was speaking about ; you haven't given me any answer yet ; you confined yourself to general expressions—

FRITZ (*laughingly*). Well, ecosh ! seeing that I'm a general.

GRAND D. (*with a forced laugh*). Capital ! capital ! But a truce to pleasantries. You really must answer.

FRITZ. So, then, the lady in question not only asked you to deliver her message, but to bring back the answer as well ?

GRAND D. Exactly so. Well ?

FRITZ (*exclaiming*). Ah !

GRAND D. What's the matter ?

FRITZ. Nothing, only in arranging my collar you slightly—

GRAND D. Oh ! I beg your pardon.

FRITZ. Granted.

GRAND D. But come ; your answer. Say you were by that lady's side as now you are by mine, what would you say to her ?

FRITZ. Well, ecosh !

GRAND D. That's pretty well, so far, only it's an expression you use rather frequently ; but you say it so well. Come, proceed. After saying well, ecosh !

FRITZ. To tell you the truth, I should be confoundedly puzzled.

[Enter NEPOMUC, bearing a despatch.

NEPO. Your Highness !

[FRITZ rises and crosses L.

GRAND D. (*rising suddenly*). Who's there ? Did I call ?

NEP. The chief of your secret police awaits an audience, your Highness.

GRAND D. (*impatiently*). Oh ! I haven't time at this moment.

NEP. Pardon me, your Highness ; the matter he has to communicate is of the deepest importance.

GRAND D. Give it me.

[*She takes the despatch. NEPOMUC retires to the back awaiting orders.*

FRITZ. (*aside*). Ah ! if it wasn't for little Wanda—dear little Wanda—it's confoundedly bothering.

GRAND D. (*reading*). "Public scandal—indecorous behaviour of General Fritz—the young girl Wanda brought by him into the capital." Oh ! this is too outrageous. (*To NEPOMUC*).—You said the chief of my police was in waiting ?

NEP. Yes, your Highness.

GRAND D. (*aside*). Wanda ! impossible ! (*To FRITZ*.) General, in an instant I will be with you again—will you excuse me ?

FRITZ. Oh yes, I'll excuse you.

GRAND D. Wait for my return. (*To NEPOMUC*) Captain Nepomuc, attend me.

[*Exit at back, followed by NEPOMUC*

FRITZ. Well, now, here's a pretty situation ! If I say to this lady, "I am very sorry I can't love you, being previously engaged," she'll be furious. Very ridiculous of her, but she will. Why isn't it quite common when you're invited to dinner, for instance, to answer, "Very sorry, a prior engagement." Of course that doesn't mean you turn up your nose at the dinner, but simply that you have had an earlier invitation. Consequently, if the lady loses her temper she'll be in the wrong. I'll go at once and tell the Duchess I've a previous invitation, she'll tell the lady, and it'll be all right.

[*Music. Enter mysteriously, PRINCE PAUL, BOOM, and PUCK.*

FRITZ. Ah ! there come my three amiable friends.

PUCK (*in a whisper to the others*). He's here !

BOOM. Won't he be confoundedly in the way if we are to have our talk !

[NEPOMUC enters at back.

NEPOMUC (*to FRITZ*). General !

FRITZ. What is it, Captain ?

NEPOMUC. Business of the State detains her Highness, who has commanded me to conduct you to your apartments in the right wing of the palace.

[*Goes up the stage and stands at back.*

PUCK (*aside to PRINCE PAUL*). Do you hear ? His apartments in the right wing ?

[PRINCE PAUL looks vacantly as unable to understand.

FRITZ (*to NEPOMUC*). Oh ! Very well, Captain. (*Aside*) That's it. I'll just tell her straight out, that, all things considered, I intend to marry Wanda, and I'll marry her off-hand at once. (*Aloud*) Now,

Captain, for the right wing. (*bowing to PRINCE PAUL, BOOM, and PUCK*) Gentlemen!—

PRINCE P. }
 BOOM. } (*bowing.*) General!—
 PUCK. }

FRITZ (*to BOOM, mockingly*). I say, poor young soldier's got on in the world a bit!

BOOM (*advancing towards him*). Did you address me?

FRITZ. Ugh!—disgrace to the service!

[*BOOM gesticulates inaignantly, PUCK restrains him. Exit*

FRITZ *at back, followed by NEPOMUC.*

PUCK (*to PRINCE PAUL, significantly*). She has commanded apartments to be prepared for him in the right wing. You heard, the right wing!

BOOM (*hesitatingly*). It's only what was to be expected.

PUCK. Exactly so. (*To PRINCE PAUL.*) But you don't understand our meaning.

PRINCE P. Not in the least.

PUCK. Ah—well—you shall soon see it all as plain as a pike-staff. Look at that picture.

PRINCE P. Yes. I'm looking at it.

PUCK. Just go and exert a smart pressure against the left boot of that noble personage.

PRINCE P. I beg your pardon. What did you say?

BOOM. He says—you're to exert a smart pressure.

PRINCE P. (*goes up to the portrait, but stops suddenly, as if hesitating*). Ah—it's some trick now.

PUCK. No trick, upon my honour.

PRINCE P. I'm sure I know what it is—there's a spring—and something will go off, and hit me in the eye.

BOOM. Nothing of the kind—go on—push!

[*PRINCE P. presses a knob, the portrait ascends, and the panel slides aside. A rush of cold air drives the PRINCE backwards. Strange sounds issue from the cavity. A clarinette in the orchestra imitates the cry of a screech owl.*]

PRINCE P. Hullo! a blind beggar with his clarinette—

BOOM. You're mistaken.

PUCK. It is the screech owl's dismal cry. Years have elapsed since yonder door was opened. (*As if about commencing a narrative*). About two hundred years ago—

PRINCE P. (*Goes up to Puck.*) You would seem to have some moving story to relate.

BOOM. A horrible tale!

PRINCE P. Unfold it.

PUCK. I will—to yonder passage there are two extremities—

PRINCE P. Most passages have two extremities on an average.

PUCK (*Continues*). One opens out into this apartment, the other communicates with the right wing where the General's quarters have been prepared.

PRINCE P. Ah!

PUCK. At this end is the portrait of a man—at the other the portrait of a lady. To open the secret panel here you press against the man's boot—at the other end you press the lady's knee—

PRINCE P. Press her knee?

PUCK. A fanciful idea of the painter's. When amongst the living

the individual whose portrait you there behold was called Count Max Winkin von Knockemoff. The portrait at the other end is that of his spouse, the Grand Duchess Victorine, ancestor of our present Sovereign.

PRINCE P. Proceed—

BALLAD AND TUO.

BOOM.

A horrible tale—a soul harrowing story.

PUCK.

These ancient walls retain its traces grim and gory.

BOOM.

Count Max conquer'd fortune right early

Thanks to his sword,

His bright eyes and moustache so curly

Ladies adored.

The Duchess with discrimination

Gave him her heart,

And the right wing for his habitation

She set apart.

Each night love with due caution wedding

Max at that door,

Would list for a light footstep threading

Yon corridor.

PRINCE PAUL, BOOM, AND PUCK.

List to this horrible tale,

List, oh list, and the sad lot bewail,

Which untimely cut off

Brave young Count Max von Winkin Knockemoff.

PUCK.

One night Max with senses confounded

Marked in afright

That the step of his fair lady sounded

Not quite so light.

This gave him a sort of a shake up.

He saw his fate

Too late for a bolt his mind to make up.

That step of weight

Announced some dozen brisk young fellows

Resolved quite

To make a hole in Max's bellows

Ere morning's light.

PAUL.

Twelve men of blood—

BOOM.

Closely mask'd o'er.

ALL.

Came through yon door!

ENSEMBLE.

&c.

&c.

&c.

BOOM closes the secret door and returns towards PRINCE PAUL

Now the Prince surely understands.

PAUL.

I understand—see my emotion.

BOOM.

This Fritz must perish by our hands.

PAUL.

You don't say so—what an odd notion.

PUCK and BOOM.

Yes, he must perish by our hands.

BOOM.

We'll quarter him this very night,
In that same wing they call the right,
We'll quarter him, the gallant spark,
Safely caged through yon passage dark.

ENSEMBLE.

We'll quarter him this very night,
&c. &c.

PAUL.

When of night the solemn hours advance.
Friend Fritz may, on lawful rights encroaching,
At his door listen if perchance
He hear not some light step approaching.

A step so dear
And light draw near,
So light so dear,
Draw softly near,
A pretty step draw softly near.

ALL THREE.

Don't he wish that step he may hear?
Oh dear no—of that there's no fear.

BOOM.

When wild dreams his vision entrancing,
He exclaims "a Grand Duke—here's luck "
Lo sudden through the gloom advancing,
Behold us three, Paul, Boom, and Puck!

PAUL.

Yes, behold, 'tis I, Paul.

BOOM.

And behold, 'tis Boom.

PUCK.

And behold 'tis I—Puck.

ENSEMBLE.

We'll quarter him this very night.
&c. &c.

Enter the GRAND DUCHESS at back.

PRINCE P. Then it's an understood thing, we form a conspiracy.

BOOM and PUCK. We form a conspiracy.

PRINCE P. We will meet an hour hence at my residence, if that will suit you, and draw up a plan of action.

PUCK. Any refreshments?

PRINCE P. Necessarily.

BOOM. Any ladies ?

PRINCE P. What women in a conspiracy ! Boom, Boom ! What can you be thinking of ?

GRAND D. (*Coming forward*). By your leave, gentlemen, there will be one lady in your conspiracy.

ALL THREE. Her Highness !

GRAND D. Her Highness.

PUCK. We're lost.

PRINCE P. Nothing left but to make a bolt of it.

GRAND D. Gentlemen, you have nothing to fear. You are conspiring against General Fritz. Enrol me among your number.

BOOM. Can your Highness mean it ?

PUCK (*Aside*). That's how the land lies, eh ?

PRINCE P. (*Aside*). After all, it's better so for all parties.

GRAND D. Are you aware of General Fritz's latest proceedings ? He has sent to me requesting my consent to his marriage with Wanda. That consent I have granted. The General is now before the altar of the Chapel in the Palace, and from thence he will proceed to—

ALL THREE. Proceed where ?

GRAND D. To the spot—where you will lie in wait for him—his apartment in the right wing.

ALL THREE (*With delight*). The right wing !

ENSEMBLE.

We'll quarter him this very night, &c.

[*Exeunt dancing.*]

ACT III.

TABLEAU THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—*The Crimson Chamber—A gothic hall. To the R. first entrance a door. Another L. second entrance. On the same side third entrance a secret door hidden by a picture representing Grand Duchess of Victorine in full length. At back L. a window. R. an alcove with curtains. Between the window and alcove a console, table, chairs. The doors in front are masked by hangings. When the curtain rises the stage is dark and unoccupied. Enter the GRAND DUCHESS preceded by a page carrying a candelabra. The stage becomes light. The page withdraws after having placed the candelabra on the console table. The GRAND DUCHESS left alone utters a short cry, which is responded to by an extraordinary noise behind the scenes, and GENERAL BOOM enters by first door L. While this action is going on, festive music is heard in the distance.*

BOOM (*Saluting the GRAND D.*). Your Highness !

GRAND D. Well, General, where did you leave him ?

BOOM. At his own wedding ball—dancing. He was executing with extraordinary agility the step called *cavalier seul*.

GRAND D. Dancing ! and in a brief space that man, now so full of life and vigour, will be a—but are all your precautions taken for the deed were he to make his appearance now ?

BOOM. No fear of that. I informed him it was your Highness's express command, he was not to leave the ball till the last country dance was over.

GRAND D. And how did he receive that command ?

BOOM. With every sign of dissatisfaction. He exclaimed, "That's a treat when a man's just starting on his wedding trip."

GRAND D. He said that, did he ?

BOOM. Those very words.

GRAND D. How he doats on that little chit of a thing, but patience, patience ! (*She remains standing with her eyes fixed on the floor.*)

BOOM. What is your Highness gazing at ?

GRAND D. Look there upon those boards, a broad dark deep stain, 'tis blood ! To visitors who come to view the interior of the palace, that stain is pointed out. "On that spot," they are told, "Count Max fell assassinated." Whether it is so or not I'm sure I don't know, but the porter at the palace gate says so, and he makes a tidy thing by it.

GRAND DUCHESS (*seriously*).

Oh grave lesson cull'd from the past !

BOOM.

Edifying page torn from hist'ry.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Its gloom here tragedy hath cast !

BOOM.

Lurid lightning through midnights myst'ry

GRAND DUCHESS.

And all that at some future date,
The dark tale telling to his profit,
The porter at the palace gate,
May make a little income of it.

ENSEMBLE.

The porter at the palace gate,
May make a little income of it.

II.

GRAND DUCHESS.

What has been done, is done again.

BOOM.

Life moves in circles as fate sways it.

GRAND D.

Of blood the sire's hand bears the stain—

BOOM.

Comes the child—who takes up and plays it.

GRAND D.

And all as centuries roll on
That by trading on deeds so shocking
The son of that same porter's son
May put some money in a stocking.

ENSEMBLE.

The son of that same porter's son
May put some money in a stocking.

BOOM. Dating from to-morrow two stains will darken that floor, and two little incomes will accrue to the porters of the palace.

GRAND D. In all probability—but where are your accomplices ?

BOOM (*Pointing to the secret door*). They await my signal, stationed in yonder secret passage.

GRAND D. Open the door, and let them enter, while I conceal myself behind that arras (*points to the door, by which she entered*).

BOOM. That'll be capital !

GRAND D. Why will that be capital ?

BOOM. Because if your Highness were not concealed there the plot would be deficient in the feminine element.

GRAND D. Ah, good ! but take care you don't reveal my presence. In due time, and when I think proper, I shall show myself.

BOOM. Your Highness.

GRAND D. Now summon your friends, and oblige me by carrying this business through smartly. (*Disappears behind drapery*).

BOOM. (*Alone*). There's the portrait ; now for the secret spring. (*Touches the knee of the portrait, and the panel slides back. Enter PUCK, PRINCE PAUL, NEPOMUC, and BARON GROG.*) One, two, three, four—where are the rest ?

PUCK. They will be at hand at the proper time. If we had all come together such a simultaneous rush might have excited suspicion.

BOOM. Quite right !

PRINCE P. First of all we must settle exactly what we're to do.

BOOM (*To NEPOMUC*). Captain, are you in our little affair ?

NEPO. Well, General, when I found it was agreeable to the Grand Duchess's feelings—

PRINCE P. Sly dog !

NEPO. I am a poor man, Sir, but I desire to better myself.

BOOM. Give me your hand, Captain.

NEPO. There is my hand, General. (*They shake hands.*)

BOOM. I esteem a man of your stamp. (*To PRINCE PAUL*). Does the Baron join us, Prince ?

PRINCE P. Yes, General.

ALL (*Saluting BARON GROG*). Baron.

GROG. Gentlemen. (*Bows in return.*)

PUCK (*To BARON*). The Baron is acquainted with the nature of this business.

GROG (*Carelessly*). Oh perfectly. Somebody's to be killed.

PRINCE P. It's to be done in this apartment.

PUCK. Yes, here, here the blow is to be struck.

BOOM. And now I have a word to say to all present. (*Draws his sword.*)

PUCK. What are you going to do now ?

PRINCE P. Pray put that up.

ALL. Put it up, put it up.

BOOM. When a man engages in a business of this kind, he must carry it through without flinching. The first man who shows any disposition to flinch I'll slice him into four quarters.

PUCK. Well, but nobody does want to flinch.

BOOM (*Going up to PRINCE PAUL*). If you've any intention of flinching say so, and I'll slice you into four quarters.

PRINCE P. Pray put up your sword.

PUCK. Haven't you been told nobody wants to flinch ?

BOOM. (*Sheathing his sword*). What I've said, I've said.

PRINCE P. There now, drop the subject.

Enter the GRAND DUCHESS R. She places herself between BOOM and PUCK.

GRAND D. Gentlemen, are you quite sure your daggers are of true steel ?

THE CONSPIRATORS (*Saluting the GRAND DUCHESS*). Your Highness.

GRAND D. Concealed yonder I have been the unseen witness of all, resolving to present myself at the last moment in order if requisite to urge on your resolution; but I am glad to perceive you need it not.

NEPO. I rather think not.

PUCK. Let him come, and you shall see.

BOOM. I'll slice him into four quarters.

GRAND D. Gentlemen, there is one request I have to make.

PUCK. Say a command, your Highness.

GRAND D. Let me impress upon you above all things not to disfigure his countenance—spare his countenance.

GROG (*who has been standing apart hidden by the PRINCE, ironically*). Such a pity to spoil his handsome countenance.

GRAND D. Who said that?

GROG (*coming forward*). I did.

GRAND D. Who are you? I know every one of the conspirators who are here, but you I never saw before.

PRINCE P. That's my Grog.

GRAND D. Your Grog?

PRINCE P. Don't you know? Baron Grog—papa's envoy, whom you refused to grant an audience to.

GRAND D. (*casting a look of interest at GROG, and crossing over to PRINCE PAUL*). I have been much in fault for so doing.

BOOM. Your Highness!

GRAND D.—Nothing, nothing. Go and post your men, gentlemen, and when you have done so, return all three; you, Baron Grog, I wish to remain.

GROG (*in astonishment*). Your Highness!

GRAND D. Well—what? Have you not requested that I would grant you an audience? Very well, that audience I am now about to grant you. (*To the CONSPIRATORS*.) Begone, gentlemen, begone.

PRINCE P. (*aside*). I'll just give my Grog a slight stirup. (*To GROG*) Grog, be hot and strong, Grog!

[BOOM, PUCK, and PRINCE PAUL go out by first door L., the GRAND DUCHESS follows after them a few steps, GROG crosses R. *Melodramatic music.*

GRAND D. (*coming down towards GROG*). The first thing that struck me about you, Baron, is that you look such a good creature.

GROG. Your Highness!

GRAND D. What I call a thoroughly good creature.

GROG. It is your pleasure, then, I presume, that we should converse on the subject of my master, the Prince.

GRAND D. Yes, but that'll do presently. Allow me, first of all, to express how gratified I am that I can call a person like yourself by the name of friend.

GROG. I beg your pardon.

GRAND D. Am I not right—or surely you would not be among those who are about to avenge me?

GROG. As regards that part of the matter, I confess I am not precisely actuated by friendship. Your Highness obstinately refused to receive me; consequently I was left with nothing to do,—got bored, and joined the conspiracy to kill time.

GRAND D. Only to kill time?

GROG. That's all.

GRAND D. How I do admire your style of conversation. You

come out with things enough to blow one up in the air, and not a muscle of your face moves.

GROG. The result of education.

GRAND D. Indeed!

GROG. From my earliest childhood my relatives destined me to the diplomatic career; so I was taught to preserve an impassive countenance—when I was quite a little urchin.

GRAND D. (*smiling*). Some time ago though

GROG. Yes, a considerable time ago. When I was quite a little fellow, whenever I was caught not having an impassive countenance I got knocked about.

GRAND D. Poor, dear little fellow. Will you allow me to give you just one word of advice?

GROG. With the greatest pleasure.

GRAND D. By-and-by, when the time has come to pitch into General Fritz, don't put yourself forward,—you might get a slash across the face, and be disfigured for life.

GROG. That's true.

GRAND D. Keep behind the others, and when the affair is over and the time has come to recompense the actors, I shall put you before the others. (GROG, *slightly twitching his mouth*.) What's the matter! Just now your lips gave a twitch—so—(*imitates him*). If it had been any one else I shouldn't have noticed, but with you it must be equivalent to a violent explosion of laughter.

GROG. Quite correct.

GRAND D. Haven't I reckoned you up already? Well what is it makes you laugh so uncontrollably, tell me?

GROG. Can't.

GRAND D. Not my friend then?

GROG. Yes I am.

GRAND D. Then why don't you act as such?

GROG. An hour ago you expressed fears for the safety of General Fritz's countenance, you now express fears for that of mine.

GRAND D. By Jove, that's true.

GROG. Putting this and that together, if a fellow was at all conceited he might draw inferences.

GRAND D. Mustn't do that.

GROG. Oh! no.

GRAND D. We won't go on with that subject.

GROG. Suppose we return to my master, the Prince.

GRAND D. That'll do presently. What's your position at your own Court? Chamberlain?

GROG. I also hold the rank of Colonel, but only in the palace.

GRAND D. I can offer you better than that, if you feel inclined to leave the Court of the Elector.

GROG. I'm sorry to say that's not possible.

GRAND D. Not possible!

GROG. That is, unless your Highness consents to marry the Prince my master.

GRAND D. (*aside*). Tut! tut! tut!

GROG. It would then be a master of course.

GRAND D. Marry the Prince? What, you still will hark back to that subject?

GROG. I had imagined we had never digressed from it.

GRAND D. Baron, my compliments—you *are* a wonderful diplomatist.

GROG. Let me entreat your Highness to accept the Prince, he is really a very nice young man.

GRAND D. A wonderful diplomatist, there's no gainsaying.

GROG. Well your Highness, I await your decision.

GRAND D. If you must be answered Baron, I really can't tell you anything at all about it.

GROG. How?

GRAND D. The fact is, my head is all in a whirl. All my ideas go whirling, whirling, whirling. Fritz, you, Prince Paul and Puck and Boom in the background. Shall he be killed or shall he not? And if any one's killed, who shall it be? Shall it be Fritz—shall it be you?

GROG. Me!

GRAND D. Well, I can't tell; and that's what it has come to—I really can't tell you anything at all about it.

Enter PRINCE PAUL, BOOM, and PUCK, returning by first door L.

ALL THREE (*Saluting the GRAND D.*). Your Highness!

GRAND D. What is it—what's the matter? Oh it's you!

PRINCE P. (*To GROG*). Well?

GROG. All right.

PRINCE P. (*In an undertone, but overflowing with joy*). Oh—oh—my dearest friend!

GRAND D. Have you posted your men?

BOOM. We have.

GRAND D. Good. Now go back and tell them they may all go home to their families.

PUCK (*Astonished*). Eh?

GRAND D. (*Glancing significantly at GROG*). There's to be no killing.

BOOM. No killing! That's beyond a joke.

GRAND D. I beg pardon. What did you say?

BOOM. Nothing. I say nothing because your Highness is present; if your Highness were not present I should say the thing is not to be borne.

GRAND D. General, it seems to me you forget yourself.

BOOM. No, I don't mean—but look here—wasn't everything all settled? and now, just at the last moment—

PRINCE P. It is really very annoying—after taking no end of trouble.

PUCK. All the trouble was over, and nothing left but the pleasure

GRAND D. I have said it—there's to be no killing.

BOOM. But why not?

GRAND D. What? kill a man on the day of my betrothal? It would be highly unbecoming.

PUCK. The day of your betrothal?

PRINCE P. You have said the word, adored one, you have said the word.

GRAND D. I have.

PRINCE P. And you really and positively consent at last?

GRAND D. Really and positively I consent; and you may thank the Baron there for it. I was overcome by his eloquence.

PRINCE P. (*Enraptured, to GROG*). Oh, Baron, look here! Papa allows me to create a Margrave once a year, he prefers that to giving me money,—I say no more.

GRAND D. (*To BOOM and PUCK, who are having a lively discussion*). Now, General—now Baron—what have you to say?

PUCK. Your Highness, we admit that on the day you have consented to acquiesce in the suit of his Highness Prince Paul, it would be extremely out of place to—

BOOM. Granted; but it's very annoying all the same. That fellow Fritz has played me every kind of scurvy trick; robbed me of my commander-in-chief's plume, deprived me of the affections of one who might have made me happy, and I'm not to be revenged! (*With explosive energy*) The enemy! where's the—

GRAND D. If that's all, General, you may have your revenge, and welcome. Play him any trick you like in return, provided you—

BOOM. We confine ourselves to the fantastic and humorous.

GRAND D. Precisely!

BOOM. In that case, all right. (*Music*).

GRAND D. They are conducting him hither. Find out some good trick to play him, that's your affair. Prince Paul—

PRINCE P. Adored one!

GRAND D. In two hours hence I shall await you in the State room for the ceremony of troth plighting (*As she retires towards the R., the Prince rushes after her to kiss her hand*) No, Prince, not yet. (*withdraws her hand from his grasp, turning round as she is going out*) Gentlemen, Heaven be with you. [*Erit.*]

PUCK (*Listening L. to Boom*) Here he comes—what shall we do to him—

BOOM. My little scheme is matured—he shall have a wedding trip he little bargained for.

BOOM and PRINCE PAUL go up R., towards GROG, enter at first door L. FRITZ and WANDA escorted by the gentlemen and ladies of the Court, all carrying gilt lanterns.

CHORUS.

Thus far the blushing bride escorting,

We leave her now—our task is done.

In wedlock as in love's disporting,

Two's company, but three is none.

Thus far the blushing bride escorting,

Two's company, but three is none.

FRITZ. Thanks, ladies and gentlemen—thanks for your courteous escort. (*To Boom, Puck, and Grog*) You here, gentlemen—

PUCK. Yes, we wished personally to congratulate you and to do you honour.

FRITZ. I feel very much flattered, and having done me all the honour in your power perhaps you'll now do me the pleasure—

PUCK. To go.

FRITZ. Well ecosh! I think we may say good night and good-bye.

PUCK (*To FRITZ*).

Gallant Sir, we bid you good night!

THE REST.

Good night.

PUCK.

Those simple words contain a tome,

If faith adorn not now your home,

You may henceforth to all delight,

Bid good night,

CHORUS.

Good night !

BOOM (*to WANDA*).

And you, fair lady, we bid you good night.

CHORUS.

Good night !

If from your side your spouse should roam,
With winning smiles still lure him home,
Grudge not your love or to all delight

Bid good night.

CHORUS.

Good night !

[*Exeunt all at door L., except FRITZ and WANDA. Grog, Boom, Puck, and Prince Paul go out the last after making a profound bow to the newly married pair.*]

FRITZ. They're gone at last—thank heaven.

WANDA. I'm not at all sorry.

FRITZ. Nor I, nor I.

WANDA. I mean to say that now they've all done congratulating you it's my turn now to pay you my compliments.

FRITZ. Simple child.

WANDA. Most noble commander-in-chief— (*Curtseys*)

FRITZ. Ah ! I say there's a slight difference between being about to marry a simple private, poor and without prospects, and finding yourself the lady of a generalissimo crowned with victorious laurels.

WANDA. Of course, at first it is a little—

FRITZ. Confess, guileless infant, confess that you are dazzled—taken aback.

WANDA. No, not exactly that—but—

FRITZ. Yes, you are dazzled—and why ? Does my plume strike you with awe, and my laced coat, and my epaulettes, and my orders ?—Then let me doff the worthless rubbish. (*Takes off his hat, plume, his sabretash, and places them on the console table.*)

WANDA. What are you about ?

FRITZ. Removing your vain terrors.

WANDA. I'm not so sure about that.

FRITZ. Come, come, you really must get familiarised with your position. Why, aren't I your husband ? Then why make a bugbear of me ?

WANDA. It's true it's very silly of me.

SONG.

I.

Oft *tete a tete* we've been together,
How silly then to feel so strange !
Yet that laced coat I wish he'd change,
And take away that horrid feather.
Oft *tete a tete* we've been together,
Then surely I've no cause to fear
My husband dear.

[*At the end of the song a loud rolling of drums is heard.*]

WANDA. Heavens ! what's that ?

FRITZ. Can't say. (*Drums again.*)

[*Shouts heard without, "Long live General Fritz !"*]

WANDA (*going up to window*). They're calling you.

FRITZ. It's a serenade, my dear, a most undoubted serenade, in honour of my late victory. The proceeding is flattering, but the moment is awkwardly chosen.

[*Shouts again, "Long live the general!"*]

WANDA. How long are they going on so?

FRITZ. Until I address them.

WANDA. Oh, then pray do address them; you must own this sort of thing is anything but pleasant.

FRITZ. (*From the window*). Friends, countrymen, and drummers I need not tell you how deeply I feel this attention on your part, at the same time you are, perhaps, not aware that this is my wedding night; consequently, my friends, you perceive—I wish you a very good night, good night! (*Throws money out to them*). *Shouts again.* Long live General Fritz. *Drums grow fainter as if retiring, and at last cease.*

FRITZ. There, that's over, and now dearest Wanda no more of this absurd timidity.

II.

We braves may loving be, tho' drede ,
I'm a great war chief that's confest,
But neath my war-paint heaves a breast
Where martial ire and love are wedded.
Yes, I'm loving dear, tho' dreaded,
Ah, surely you've no cause to fear,
Thy husband dear.

[*Embraces WANDA. Military music heard without.*]

WANDA. More serenading!

FRITZ. The military bands—we ought to have been prepared for that—they always strike up after the drums.

(*Shouts outside*) Long live General Fritz!

WANDA. Now, isn't this too bad?

FRITZ. Wait a bit, I'll address them. (*Goes to window. Friends, countrymen, and musicians!*) [*Music ceases.*]

(*Shouts.*) Long live the General! (*Bouquets come flying in.*)

FRITZ. You perceive the delicate attention.—(*A bouquet hits him in the face*)—most delicate.—(*WANDA picks up the bouquets and puts them on the console table. FRITZ leans out of window to address the MUSICIANS.*)—My musical friends! I am sorry you did not meet the drummers on your way here—they would have told you that this is my wedding night; consequently, you perceive—I wish you a very good night! good night, my musical friends, good night.

(*Shouts.*) Long live the General!

FRITZ. They're off, and won't trouble us again I promise you. (*Shuts window.*) And now, dearest Wanda, let us resume our conversation. Let me see, where did I leave off. Ah, yes, I know.—(*Is about to embrace WANDA, when a loud knocking is heard at all the doors, excepting the secret one.*)

WANDA. What in the world is that, now?

CHORUS (*outside*).

Open your doors! open them wide!

Ere by main force the bolts we shatter.

Open your doors, bridegroom and bride,

Ere down about your ears they clatter.

WANDA

Oh, Fritz, don't open, pray.

FRITZ.

All right, dear.

WANDA.

Oh, see the door is yielding, I shall faint, love, with fear.

[*The doors fly open. Enter L. PRINCE PAUL, PUCK, BOOM, GROG, and other personages of the Court; R., the MAIDS OF HONOUR and PAGES.*]

PRINCE PAUL, PUCK, BOOM, and GROG.

Now, kind fortune be praised, we've not arriv'd too late.

FRITZ and WANDA (*aside to each other*).

What hither brings a crowd so great?

PUCK (*placing himself between FRITZ and WANDA*).

Quick to horse!—quick to horse!

And take command of all your force!

[WANDA goes back to FRITZ.]

CHORUS.

Quick to horse!—quick to horse!

And take command of all your force!

PRINCE PAUL (*coming between FRITZ and WANDA*).

Away at once, don't shilly shally,

There's not a minute to be lost;

The enemy have made a rally,

And soon our frontiers will have crost.

CHORUS.

Away at once, &c. &c.

BOOM (*coming between FRITZ and WANDA*).

Our mistress sends this message, greeting,

About the job don't puff and blow;

Nor think again her eyes of meeting

Until you've routed quite the foe.

CHORUS.

Our mistress sends this, &c. &c.

FRITZ (*to Boom*). But, my friend, are you aware

We have but this instant been made a wedded pair?

BOOM. To such commands that's no reply,

Away to conquer or to die!

FRITZ. My wife, in that case, I must leave you.

PUCK (*taking WANDA's hand*). Very good—sorry to bereave you.[*Leads her towards PRINCE PAUL, who endeavours to reconcile her.*]

Now haste away,

No more delay.

FRITZ.

My sword-belt now I want to find,

The battle's brunt since I must weather;

My sword-belt can't be left behind.

CHORUS.

Behold, 'tis here—it won't be left behind.

FRITZ.

My sabretash—both were together!

CHORUS.

Both were together !

FRITZ.

And now, my feather !

Now my feather !

That badge of high command—my plume

Now let me assume.

CHORUS.

He's got his plume.

[NEPOMUC *exit*. R., and returns with the sword.

Stop, dear Sir, here's something you've forgot, —

Behold the thing whereof you wot.

FRITZ.

What, still that falchion !

Oh, did'st thou know—sword of her father—

Than see you, what I wouldn't rather !

CHORUS.

Now haste away

Without delay.

FRITZ.

Who would not be a soldier gay?

CHORUS.

Quick to horse !—quick to horse !

And take command of all your force.

Quick to horse !

Away at once, don't shilly shally.

Against the foe you forth must sally.

Quick to horse !

SECOND TABLEAU.

SCENE—*The encampment of the First Act. Three tables at back, spread with viands and flagons. In front another table, facing the public. Two others placed obliquely. There has been a grand déjeuner and NEPOMUC, BOOM, PRINCE PAUL, PUCK, and GROG, are seated at the middle table. The ladies of the Court are at the side tables, the gentlemen standing behind them. Soldiers and peasant girls fill the back of the stage. Servants pour out wine.*

CHORUS.

Valiant boys at feast or in battle,

Drink we deep—good liquor's rare,

Quaff lads and sing, let your cups rattle,

As we toast the new plighted pair.

[*At the end of the Chorus PAUL, PUCK, BOOM, GROG, and NEPOMUC rise and come forward. The ladies rise also, but remain near their places. All have glasses in their hands.*

BOOM to PRINCE PAUL.

So at last, then, her Highness

Deigns your patient hopes to crown.

CHORUS.

To the health of her Highness

Drink a cup of Rhenish down.

PRINCE PAUL.
 However I came thus situated,
 Can any fellow understand ;
 But yesterday next door to hated,
 And now to me she plights her hand.

CHORUS.
 Plights her hand !

Enter the GRAND DUCHESS. The ladies and pages place themselves behind the middle table.

GRAND DUCHESS.
 I greet you, loyal friends.

PUCK.
 Ah, the Duchess !

PRINCE PAUL.
 Go, seek her,
 And hither bring a flowing beaker.

BOOM.
 'The newly plighted pair drink with loud ringing shout.

GRAND DUCHESS.
 In that case, dearest friends, I'll join you in a bout.

BALLAD.
 There liv'd in times, now long gone by,
 A Duke among my predecessors,
 Whose vaunt it was that he could vie
 At drinking with the best professors.

CHORUS.
 Whose vaunt it was that he could vie
 At drinking with the best professors.

GRAND DUCHESS.
 The beaker he was wont to drain
 Took twenty full quarts to replenish,
 His henchman o'er and o'er again
 Unceasing fill'd it high with Rhenish.

CHORUS.
 His henchman o'er and o'er again
 Unceasing fill'd it high with Rhenish.

GRAND DUCHESS.
 Ah, dear old man, how he could swill,
 And what a cup was his to fill !

CHORUS.
 Ah, good old times, when folks could swill,
 And had such monstrous cups to fill.

II.

GRAND DUCHESS.
 One day, somehow, it came to pass,
 It fell and was to atoms shivered,
 And as he sigh'd "There goes my glass,"
 His voice with deep emotion quiver'd.

CHORUS.
 And, as he sigh'd, "There goes my glass,"
 His voice with deep emotion quiver'd.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Another, when they brought next day,
 "No," said he, "that's not my old goblet,
 From life I'd rather pass away
 Than from another drink one droplet."

CHORUS.

From life he'd rather pass'd away,
 Than from another drink one droplet.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Ah, dear old man, how he would swill.
 &c. &c.

CHORUS.

Ah, good old times, when folks could swill !

PRINCE P. My dear wife !

GRAND D. Well, my husband ?

PRINCE P. At last my happiness is assur'd—henceforth I am yours,
 and you are mine !

GRAND D. Hum ! well perhaps you *may* venture to say so.

PRINCE P. And this felicity I owe to Baron Grog. We really *must*
 find some suitable way of rewarding him.

GRAND D. That's your view ?

PRINCE P. That's my view.

GRAND D. Your desires are now my commands. But what can I
 do for him ? All the honours I had at my disposal I have conferred
 on another. Baron Puck—General Boom—

GEN. BOOM. } Your Highness !
 PUCK. }

GRAND D. What has become of General Fritz ? I was assur'd by
 you I should find him in the camp.

PUCK. He cannot fail to be here ere long. In obedience to your
 Highness's instructions, and keeping strictly within the bounds of the
 fantastic and the ludicrous we have made him the victim of a slight
 sell ?

GRAND DUCHESS. May I ask what the sell was ?

BOOM. Your Highness ; pardon a soldier's bluntness. The case
 stands thus : For some time past my visits to a certain fair lady, who
 shall be nameless in the absence of her lord and master, have excited
 the jealousy of the latter.

GRAND D. Oh, General, General !

BOOM (*Excitedly*). My fair friend sent me a small note to this
 effect : "Don't come to-morrow ; he is furious at your persisting to
 call. He says he'll wait for you, and vows dire vengeance." An idea
 came to me ; I find out General Fritz, and I tell him : Proceed at once
 to Roc à Pic ; there you will find the forty-third of the fifty-second
 and the fifty-second of the forty-third !

GRAND D. And he went—

BOOM. He went ; but instead of the forty-third of the fifty-second
 and the fifty-second of the forty-third, he has by this time encountered
 the indignant husband.

GROG. Likewise the indignant husband's walking stick.

BOOM. Half-an-hour to go there, half-an-hour's conversation with
 the husband, and an hour and a half to limp back to the camp, would
 make him about due now.

(*Shouts outside.*) The General—the General !

BOOM. Timed him to a minute!

Enter WANDA at back, L. She comes down the stage.

Ah! see my good man home returning
From some exploit. With ardour burning
And on deeds of prowess bent,
Look how his clothing he has rent.

[Enter FRITZ in a state of utter discomfiture; his epaulettes are gone, his plume is stripped of half its feathers, and the sword in his hand is battered out of shape.]

FRITZ (*to the GRAND DUCHESS*).

AIR.

I.

Behold, here your Highness am I—
Oh my eye!
The mauling I just have come by,
Oh my eye!
Should count for as good as a fight,
For a'in't I
In a sad and most piteous plight?
Your falchion see, once straight and bright.
Knock'd into a corkscrew quite.
Oh my eye!
Yes, ecosh! he's come to sad grief,
Your valiant Commander-in-Chief.

CHORUS.

Yes, ecosh! he's come to sad grief,
Our valiant Commander-in-Chief.

FRITZ.

II.

A husband I met on my way—
Curse the day!
Says he I've got something to say,
Come here, pray.
I answer in tone light and gay:
"Fire away!"
When my back he begins to pay,
Whack-whack—and a tune there to play
That will haunt me to my dying day.
Yes, ecosh! he's come to sad grief,
Your valiant Commander-in-Chief.

GRAND D. And this is all the explanation you have to offer for your conduct?

FRITZ. All, and quite enough too.

GRAND D. So then, instead of leading my army to the field as I commanded, you have been embroiling yourself in a paltry attempt to disturb the peace of families.

FRITZ. Well, that's a nice way of putting it.

GRAND D. Your offence, Sir, is high treason. And is this a plight in which to come into my presence?

FRITZ. Now haven't I told you all about it?

GRAND D. Look at the falchion of my father. What does it look like.

FRITZ. It was that confounded fellow with his cane.

BOOM (*to FRITZ*). Ugh! You disgrace the service.

FRITZ. What's that? Take care what you say.

PUCK. In my humble opinion, your Highness, but one course is before us. A drum head court-martial on the spot.

FRITZ. A court-martial!

GRAND D. Yes, ecosh!

FRITZ. You can't touch me with a court-martial. As a noble of this realm I can only be tried by my peers.

GRAND D. Indeed, suppose I cancel your patent of nobility. From this moment you cease to be a Count.

FRITZ. You've got me there!

GRAND D. What think you of that Colonel?

FRITZ. Colonel! I thought I was a General.

GRAND D. I said Colonel.

FRITZ. Oh! very well, suppose you say Captain next.

GRAND D. With all my heart, Captain.

FRITZ. Why not Lieutenant?

GRAND D. Lieutenant, be it so.

FRITZ. That's it! All right, hadn't you better go on to Serjeant?

GRAND D. Certainly, Serjeant.

FRITZ. Good again, good again.

GRAND D. Why stop, there are more rounds of the ladder yet, Corporal comes next.

FRITZ. And one more step down—private Fritz.

GRAND D. Private Fritz you are.

FRITZ. Private Fritz?

GRAND D. Private Fritz.

BOOM. I said I'd be one with you—ugh—you disgrace to the service.

FRITZ. A private, eh? Very well, then, I apply for my discharge.

GRAND D. Granted!

FRITZ. Much obliged, I wish you a very good evening. Come along, Wanda.

GRAND D. Now, then, all these honours and dignities are at my disposal.

BOOM. Ah! a beam of hope dawns upon me.

GRAND D. Prince, I am now in a position to gratify your wishes. Baron Grog approach.

GROG. Your Highness, I obey.

GRAND D. Henceforth the plume of Commander-in-Chief is yours—take it—wear it.

BOOM. Confound him!

GRAND D. Wear this also—(*presents sword*)—the sabre of my father!

BOOM. Furies!

GRAND D. Baron Grog—the supreme authority of the State, civil and military, is vested in your hands.

GROG. Your Highness—you have earned the blessings of a devoted wife.

GRAND D. What's that?

GROG. The Baroness Grog will for ever bless you.

GRAND D. (*to the PRINCE*). Your Grog possesses a wife?

PRINCE P. A wife and three small children.

GROG. Pardon me, four; since our sojourn here I am the proud parent of a fourth.

GRAND D. A wife and four small Grog—and I had kept him bottled up in reserve, in case at the last moment I should feel inclined to change my mind. Wretched Grog!

GROG—Your Highness.

GRAND D. Give up the plume—give up the *fashion*—General Boom—resume—the plume!

BOOM. This time I'll have a blacksmith to rivet it on my head.

GRAND D. Baron Puck—(*Puck advances; she presents the sword to him*). Take this—corkscrew—I appoint you custodian of the sabre of my father.

PUCK. I'll have a duplicate made.

FRITZ. Go it! They have all got sealed patents, but I've only got the whacks.

GRAND D. Come, I won't be too hard. What post would you like?

FRITZ. A village schoolmaster.

GRAND D. Can you read and write?

FRITZ. That's just it—I want to learn.

GRAND D. The appointment is granted.

FRITZ. And Fritz is thankful.

GRAND D. As for you, Baron Grog—

GROG. Your Highness—

GRAND D. You will return this very evening to the Court of the Elector—our future father-in-law.

GROG. Eh, what?

GRAND D. And you will inform him of my happiness—for is it not happiness to be united to Prince Paul.

[*Takes the Prince's arm, and squeezes it.*]

PRINCE P. (*As if in pain*). Oh! Oh!

GRAND D. Well, we must bend to our fate. (*Aside, looking alternately at FRITZ and GROG*). When we can't have what we like, we must like what we have.

FINALE.

GENERAL BOOM.

At last I remount the tall feather!

PUCK.

At last I'm to power restored!

PRINCE PAUL.

At last we're bound in Hymen's tether!

GROG.

At last I'll see my little ones ador'd!

WANDA to FRITZ.

To our cot dearest now return we.

FRITZ.

At home we shall be on safe ground.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Come, the fortune of war ne'er spurn we (*points to PRINCE P.*)

Perhaps bliss may there yet be found.

FRITZ.

Let others battle with the foe,
I bid a long farewell to slaughter,
My patriotic zeal I'll show
By rearing many a son and daughter.

CHORUS.

His patriotic zeal he'll show
By rearing many a son and daughter.

GRAND DUCHESS.

Since now with more or less effect
Our part is played—we name the day, sirs;
Tho' hardly dreamt—'tis most correct—
So drops the curtain on our play, Sirs.

CHORUS.

Tho' hardly dreamt—'tis most correct
So drops the curtain on our play, sirs,

GRAND DUCHESS.

Oh! how my sire had hail'd the sight—
His daughter settled down outright!

CHORUS.

Ah! how her sire had hail'd the sight—
His daughter settled down outright.

FINIS.

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